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to



THE  
*Congress Caravan*

*The History of the Indian National Congress  
and of India's Struggle for Swaraj  
1885-1945.*

R. P. AIYAR  
&  
L. S. BHANDARE

**NATIONAL YOUTH PUBLICATIONS,  
BOMBAY.**

# ***THE CONGRESS CARAVAN***

***1885-1945.***

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**To**  
**THE MEMORY OF**

*Sri S. Satyamurti*

Selfless patriot, gifted orator, Parliamentary non-pareil, matchless organiser and great martyr whose lifelong loyalty to the Congress was a thing of beauty and a joy for ever.

The pioneer of a new generation, he brought with him a freshness of outlook, a directness of purpose and a certain impatience of conventional and circuitous methods. In that striking personality, vivid, masterful, resolute, tenacious, there were no blurred or nebulous outlines, there were no relaxed fibres, there were no moods of doubt and hesitation and there were no pauses of lethargy or fear.

Satyamurti is dead. Long live Satyamurti !



# ***Preface***

The Indian National Congress is the expression and epitome of India's struggle for freedom. It is the only powerful political organisation of the people. It has successfully weathered many storms and survived many ordeals. It is a sacred temple at whose altar millions of its followers are prepared to lay down and offer all they possess. It is verily the life breath of the nation.

Its constructive achievements are remarkable and without a parallel in history. Through the Swadeshi movement and the boycott programme of the noncooperation movement, the Congress supplied the required fillip to the industrialisation of India. Who can forget the services rendered by the National Planning Committee, as also the unfortunate circumstances under which its activities have been suspended. The Harijan Sevak Sangh is the only organisation which is fighting ceaselessly for the rights of the so-called Depressed classes for complete equality. In the field of prohibition, the achievements of the Congress stand very high. The successive civil Disobedience movements very greatly accelerated the disappearance of the purdah and the awakening of women. The All India Spinner's Association is providing work for over 3,00,000 villagers. Through the All India Village Industries Association, the Congress is trying to resuscitate village arts and crafts. The fundamental idea is to make the villages prosperous by making them self sufficient and



to decentralise production and thus to avoid the evils of capitalism. The Talimi Sangh imparts practical literacy and familiarity with some useful handicraft. The Hindi Pracharak Samiti is popularising Hindustani and thus forging the bonds of a common Nationhood. Above all the Congress has made the villager and the average Indian stand up to officialdom more fearlessly than before. These are but a tithe of the manifold achievements of the Congress which today expresses the determination of a resurgent India to be free.

Ever since its inception, the Congress has been the mouthpiece of the nation's aspirations and the vehicle of its ideals. Its founders and early supporters were by no means revolutionaries. They were Reformists in every sense of the term. They believed in Constitutional agitation. Petitions, prayers and protests were their weapons. But twenty five years ago, under the incomparable lead of Gandhiji, who embodies in his unique personality the highest aspirations and the highest yearnings of the Indian race, the Congress took a new turning. The nation turned its back on the methods of supplication. The begging bowl was thrown aside. We realised that power has to be wrested from unwilling hands. A nation will truly enjoy freedom only when in the process of winning it, it has been purified and consolidated through and through, until liberty has become a part of its very soul. An Act of Parliament can never create citizens in India. The strength and spirit of a nation cannot be got by Reform Acts. Effort and sacrifice are the necessary conditions of real, stable freedom. Realising this funda-

mental fact, the Congress sounded the tocsin. The struggle for Swaraj started. The war is going on still and will continue till India takes her rightful place in the comity of free nations of the world.

In this war, what has hitherto been in the world an undesirable but necessary incident in freedom's battles, the killing of innocent men has been eliminated; and that which is the true essential for forging liberty, the self purification and self-strengthening of men and women has been kept pure and unalloyed. It is for everyone who lives in and loves India to do his bit in this battle, not waiting for others, not calculating the consequences.

The best preparation for anyone who desires to take part in the great war now going on is a deep study of the history of the freedom movement an outline of which is attempted in these pages. There is a peculiar appropriateness in its publication now, for 1945 is the year of the Diamond Jubilee of the Congress. It is time we assessed our achievements and found out the causes of our failure. This book is a labour of love. No such labour does need any apology and no apology will suffice for any other labour.

Every care has been taken to ensure accuracy. But it is idle to suppose that with all caution, one can escape falling into any error, the correction of which however will be thankfully received and utilised as occasion permits. We are deeply indebted to Mr. Vasant Neurekar for

considerable help rendered in obtaining information. The attractive design for the cover is the work of Mr. P. H. Trivedi the talented young artist. It is difficult to express properly our thanks to him. Our thanks are also due to Mr. Kalyanji Vishrani of the National Youth Publications and the Rose Printers Ltd. for hearty cooperation.

*18th May*  
*1945.*

**R. P. A.**  
**L. S. B.**

# ***The Congress Caravan***

## **Part I**

**1885—1914**

**FIRST SESSION—Bombay—1885.**

*President* :—**Womesh Chandra Bonnerji.**

**General Secretary: Allan Octavian Hume.**

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

Surely never has so important and comprehensive an assemblage occurred within historical times on the soil of India. I claim for this an entirely representative character. It is true that judged from the standard of the House of Commons, we are not representatives of the people of India in the sense the members of the House are representatives of the constituencies. But if community of sentiments, community of feelings and community of wants enable anyone to speak on behalf of others, then assuredly we can justly claim to be representatives of the people of India. It may be said that we are self-elected but that is not so. The news that this Congress would be held had been known throughout the year in the different provinces of India and we all know that every where the news had been received with great satisfaction by the people at large and though no formal elections have been held, the representatives have been selected by all the different associations and bodies.

*President:—*

Born in December 1844. Belonged to a family of lawyers. Articled as a clerk to an European Attorney. Started the Bengalee newspaper. Got the Jeejeebhai Scholarship in 1864 and went to England. Was called to the bar, 1867. Advocate, Calcutta High Court, 1868. Soon was at the top of the ladder in the profession. Made Standing Counsel of Government. Thrice declined seat on the bench. Fellow of the Calcutta University 1880. Chosen by the University to Bengal Legislative Council. President, First Session of Indian National Congress. Bombay 1885. Attended successive sessions and took part in the discussion of various resolutions such as appointment of a Parliamentary Committee 1888 and grievances before supply, 1889. Member of the Congress delegation to England, 1890. Did valuable work. Moved the delegates at Nagpur Congress in 1891 to adopt resolution on necessity of holding Congress session every year in India. President, Indian National Congress, Allahabad 1892. Left India for good in 1902. Settled in a magnificent house at Croydon. Considerable practice at the Privy Council. Signal services to the British Committee of the Indian National Congress. Intended to stand for Parliament but died on 21st July 1906.

*Details of the Session:—*

Seventy two representatives from all over India met at the Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit College situated at the Gowalia Tank Road. Informal discussions for two days. The subjects discussed in the open session were (1) Enquiry

into the working of the Indian Administration by a Royal Commission (2) the abolition of the Council of the Secretary of State as at present constituted (3) the reform and expansion of the Imperial and the local Legislative Councils including the right of interpellation and the submission of the budgets to the councils (4) the holding of simultaneous examinations in India and England of the Civil Service (5) the reduction of military expenditure (6) the reimposition of the import cotton and the extension of the License Tax, together with an Imperial guarantee to the Indian debt and (7) the separation of Burma from the Indian Viceroyalty. The first resolution was moved by Mr. G. Subramonia Iyer.

## SECOND SESSION-Calcutta-1886.

*President:—Dadabhai Naoroji.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Dr. Rajendralal Mitra. General Secretary: A. O. Hume. Delegates: 406.

### *Extract from Presidential Address:—*

A National Congress must confine itself to questions in which the entire nation has a direct participation and it must leave the adjustment of social reforms and other class questions to class congresses. But it does not follow that because this national political body does not presume to discuss social reforms, the delegates here present are not just as deeply, nay in many cases far more deeply, interested in these questions than in those political questions we do discuss or that those several communities whom

those delegates represent are not doing their utmost to solve those complicated problems on which hinge the practical introduction of those reforms. Any man who has eyes and ears open must know what struggles towards higher and better things are going on in every community .....All the benefits we have derived from British Rule, all the noble projects of our British rulers will go for nothing if after all the country is to continue sinking deeper and deeper into the abyss of destitution.

*President.--*

Born 4th September 1825. Brilliant academic career. Lecturer in Elphinstone School 1845. Instrumental in founding, organising and stabilising several public institutions. Started Rast Gafter, a Gujarati weekly 1851. Went to England as representative of Cama & Co, 1855. Became their partner later. Founded the East India Association 1867. Professor of Gujarati in the University College, London. Returned to India, 1869. Presented with address and purse of Rs. 30,000. Gave evidence before Fawcett Commission, 1873. Appointed Dewan of Baroda, 1874. Left the Gaekwar after short service. Nominated to Bombay Legislative Council 1885. Associated with Congress from inception. Contested unsuccessfully Holborn seat for Parliament 1886. Lord Salisbury calls him "black man". President, Indian National Congress, Calcutta 1886. Elected to Parliament from Central Finsbury 1892. President, National Congress, Lahore 1892. Defeated in Parliamentary elections of 1899 and 1905. President, Indian National Congress, Calcutta 1906. Published his

great book. Poverty and Un-British Rule in India. Left for England, February 1907. Died 30th June 1917.

*Details of the Session :—*

The number of delegates had gone up to 406. The enthusiasm was still more and there was a large number of visitors. Resolutions passed at this session were more comprehensive and better digested than at the first. The poverty of India was stressed and introduction of representative institutions was held to be the only remedy. A Public Services Committee was appointed and asked to report to the Congress. The Committee headed by Dadabhai Naoroji immediately submitted an eight point statement and the Congress approved and adopted it. The system of trial by jury was asked to be extended all over India. The separation of Judicial from executive functions in the administration of Criminal Justice in the country was stressed. As a practical step towards the working of the Congress, Provincial Congress Committees were to be established throughout the country. At the close of the session, a deputation from the Congress headed by the President, called on Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy.

**THIRD SESSION-Madras-1887.**

*President :—***Budruddin Tyabji.**

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Rajah Sir T. Madhava Row. General Secretary: A. O. Hume. Delegates: 607.



*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

I for one am utterly at a loss to understand why Mussulmans should not work shoulder to shoulder with their fellow countrymen of other races and creeds for the common benefit of all.....When they say that the educated natives of India are disloyal, what does it mean? It means this: that in the opinion of the educated natives, that is to say, of all the men of light and leading, all those who have received a sound liberal and enlightened education, all those who are acquainted with the history of their own country and with the nature of the present and past governments, that in the opinion of all these—the English Government is so bad that it has deserved to forfeit the confidence and the loyalty of the thinking part of the population.

*President:—*

Born 8th October 1844. Educated in London. Joined the Middle Temple and was called to the bar, April 1867. Established lucrative practice. Secretary of the Anjuman-Islam 1880 and later its President. President, Bombay Presidency Association. Nominated to the Bombay Legislative Council, 1882. One of the founders of the Indian National Congress and contributed to success of first session, 1885. President, Indian National Congress, Madras 1887. Appointed Judge of the Bombay High Court, 1895. Established a reputation as a fearless and independent judge. Presided over the Mahomedan Educational Conference, Bombay 1903 and pleaded for women education and abolition of purda. Early in 1909 went to England

for eye treatment. Did propaganda for the cause of India. Attended Aligarh College Association and pleaded for the College becoming a University. Died 11th August 1909.

*Details of the Session:—*

For the first time the Congress session was held in a specially erected pandal. A committee was appointed to consider rules to be framed in regard to the constitution and working of the Congress. The committee drafted a set of tentative rules but no decision arrived at. The session passed the usual resolutions, on expansion of Legislative Councils, separation of executive from judicial functions, military service and Indian Volunteer Corps. Requested that the taxable minimum of Income Tax should be raised to Rs. 1,000 and the deficit in income should be made up by the reimposition of an import duty on finer classes of cotton goods. Requested the Government to elaborate a scheme of technical education. Opined that the Arms Act cast an unmerited slur on the loyalty of the people and requested the Government to modify the provisions of the Act. Lord Connemara attended the reception given by Mr. Eardley Norton and received the delegates at the Government House.

**FOURTH SESSION-Allahabad-1888.**

*President:—George Yule.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Pandit Ajoodia Nath. General Secretary: A. O. Hume. Delegates: 1,248.

*Extract from Presidential Address:-*

We desire no sudden snapping of existing ties; we ask only for the loosening of the bonds. We are content to regard ourselves as in the position of the man who has long been confined in a darkened room on account of disordered eyesight. We know that under the skilful treatment of a kindly physician, our visual powers have been strengthened. We have sense enough not to demand the full blaze of day to be suddenly let in upon us, but only such a drawing aside of the curtains as will adjust the light to our powers of vision. But if the physician, skilful and kindly as we recognise him to be, were to insist upon our remaining in the dark, we should be forced to the unwelcome conclusion that his skill was resultless and abortive or that the unlovable side of his character had manifested itself in what he wished to keep us in the dark for some unworthy purpose of his own. If under such treatment, we become discontented with his services, the blame of it would be with the physician and not with the patient.

*President:—*

Very little is known of the early life of George Yule. He was a prominent merchant of Calcutta. He was elected to preside over the Indian National Congress held at Allahabad in 1888. Sheik Raza Hussein Khan in supporting his election produced a Fatwa from the spiritual leader of the Sunni Community at Lucknow. From that time he took great interest in the Congress movement and when in 1890 at Calcutta, the Government returned the invitation

to the Congress session, he fulminated against the "Dog-berry clothed in a little brief authority." Yule was of considerable help in strengthening the British Committee of the Indian National Congress and the Sessions of 1890 and 1891 recorded their appreciation of his services. Died in 1892.

*Details of the Session:—*

The Congress session was preceded by a spate of pamphleteering. Considerable difficulty was experienced in procuring a site for the Congress. The Maharajah of Dharbhanga purchased the Lowther Castle and placed it at the disposal of the Reception Committee. Opposition to the Congress by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Raja Shiva Prasad of Benares. Correspondence between Sir Auckland Colvin and Mr. Hume. Lord Dufferin's St. Andrews Dinner speech and Mr. Eardley Norton's powerful reply. The Congress reiterated the resolutions passed at the previous sessions. Urged a Commission of Enquiry into the existing system of Police administration which was declared to be highly unsatisfactory and oppressive. Noted the serious increase in the consumption of intoxicants and requested the Government to discourage insobriety. Asked for a mixed commission to enquire into the industrial condition of the country. Requested the Provincial Congress Committees to report on the Permanent Land Revenue Settlement.

**FIFTH SESSION—Bombay—1889.**

*President:—Sir William Wedderburn.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Sir Pheroze-shah Mehta. General Secretary: A. O. Hume. Delegates: 1889.

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

The interests of the Indian services are in great measure antagonistic to the interests of the Indian taxpayer.....Who can reasonably expect officials to love economy which means reduction of their own salaries or reform which means restriction of their own authority? It cannot be expected that our official administration in India will work for peace, economy and reform.....In the matter of parliamentary control, things have gone from bad to worse, until they are now about as bad as can be..... If he had fairplay, the ryot might develop into a substantial yeoman instead of being the starveling he is. With a fertile soil, a glorious sun and abundance of highly skilled labour, there is no reason why India should not become a garden if the ryot were not crushed by his debts.

*President:—*

Born 25th March 1836. Entered the Indian Civil Service. For over a couple of decades served as District Magistrate, Judge, Member of Legislative Council and in other responsible posts. Resigned from Civil Service in 1885 and took to public life. Co-operated with Hume in his efforts to channelise Indian political discontent. President, Indian National Congress, Bombay 1889. Connected with the British Committee of the Indian National Congress. Attended the 20th session of the Congress. Re-elected President, Indian National Congress, Allahabad, 1910. Tried hard to bring about a rapprochement between the Congress and the Muslims. Toured throughout the country. Pour-parlers with the Aga Khan. Successive

sessions of the Congress passed resolutions appreciating his meritorious services to the Congress cause. Wrote a number of books and did considerable propaganda for India. Health impaired by overwork. Died 25th March 1918.

### *Details of the Session:—*

This session is known as the Bradlaugh session as Mr. Charles Bradlaugh M. P. attended it and spoke. A strange coincidence was that this session of 1889 had 1889 delegates. The number of delegates returnable from each Congress circle was limited to 5 per million of its total population. Demanded simultaneous holding in India and England of all examinations for all Civil branches of the Public Service in India. Referred to the Currency problem and requested that the plate duties should be immediately abolished and that Hall-marking should be made a voluntary institution. An omnibus resolution was passed, ratifying and confirming the resolutions passed by previous Congresses. At the conclusion of the Congress, addresses were presented to Mr. Bradlaugh on behalf of all parts of the country. Mr. Bradlaugh in the course of a memorable oration said, "For whom should I work, if not for the people? Born of the people, trusted by the people, I will die of the people and I know no geographical or race limitations." He promised to introduce a Reform Bill in the parliament.

### **SIXTH SESSION-Calcutta-1890.**

*President : Sir Pherozeshah Mehta.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Man Mohan Ghose. General Secretaries: A. O. Hume and Pandit Ajoodia Nath. Delegates: 677.

*Extract from Presidential Address :—*

To my mind, a Parsi is a better and a truer Parsi, as a Mahomedan or a Hindu is a better and truer Mahomedan or Hindu, the more he is attached to the land which gave him birth, the more he is bound in brotherly relations and affection to all the children of the soil the more he recognises the fraternity of all the native communities of the country and the immutable bond which binds them together in the pursuit of common aims and objects..... We have survived the ridicule, the abuse and the misrepresentation. We have survived the charge of sedition and disloyalty. We have survived the charge of being a microscopic minority. We have also survived the atrocious crime of being educated and we have even managed to survive the grievous charge of being all Babus in disguise..... It may be that sometimes we speak in uncouth and outlandish ways, it may be that we sometimes stray in some confusion of thought and language; still it is the prayer of a rising, growing and hopeful nation.

*President:—*

Born 4th August 1845. Went to England in 1864 and called to the bar. Returned to India in 1868 and was duly enrolled. Entered the Municipal Corporation of Bombay and made his presence felt. His municipal career often compared to that of Joseph Chamberlain in Birmingham. Founder-President of the Bombay Presidency Association. Associated with the Congress from its very inception. Member, Bombay Legislative Council, 1886. President Indian National Congress, Calcutta 1890. Elected to the Imperial Legislative

Council 1893. Known for his fearless and outspoken criticism in the Council. C. I. E. 1894. Chairman, Reception Committee of the Congress, Bombay 1904. Knighted 1902. Took keen interest in the rights of Indians Overseas. Visited England for Congress propaganda. Vice-Chancellor of the Bombay University. In 1911 started the Central Bank of India. Founded the Bombay Chronicle in 1913. Died 5th November 1915.

### *Details of the Session:—*

The Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal returned the visitors' tickets sent to him as usual by the Reception Committee and wrote that the orders of the Government of India definitely prohibit the presence of Government servants at such meetings. The Congress was slowly leaving its official patronage. Ratified the previous resolutions of the Congress. Resolved to hold a session of National Congress in London in 1892. A Congress deputation headed by Surendranath Banerjea and W. C. Bonnerji was to go to England to represent the Congress demands. Funds were sanctioned for the British Committee of the Indian National Congress. Urged the extension of the permanent land revenue settlement to all portions of the country where it had not been introduced till then.

### SEVENTH SESSION—Nagpur—1891.

*President:—P. Ananda Charlu.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: C. Narayan-swami Naidu. General Secretaries : A. O. Hume and Pandit Ajoodia Nath. Delegates : 812.



*Extract from Presidential Address :—*

We as the pioneers of the movement, may attain little more than the satisfaction of upholding what is right and protesting against what is wrong, but succeeding generations will reap the fruit of our labours and will cherish with fond remembrance the names of those who had the courage and the humanity, the singleness of purpose and the self-sacrificing devotion to duty to work for the benefit of posterity in spite of columny and persecution and great personal loss. Men such as these may attain no titles of distinction from Government but they are "nobles by the right of an earlier creation." They may fail to win honour from their contemporaries as the truest apostles but they are "priests by the imposition of a mightier hand," and when their life's work is done, they will have that highest of all earthly rewards—the sense of having left their country better than they had found it—the glory of having built up into an united and compact nation the diverse races and classes of the Indian population and the satisfaction of having led a people sunk in political and social torpor to think and act for themselves and strive to work out their own well being.

*President:—*

Born in 1843. Graduated from the Presidency College Madras. Qualified for law and set up practice in 1869. Was a delegate to the first Indian National Congress held in Bombay in 1885. Since then, till his death he was an ardent Congressman. The India Council was the main target of his attack at successive Congress sessions. He described it as

"the oligarchy of fossilized Indian administrators who were superannuated for service in India." President, Indian National Congress, Nagpur 1891. Member of the Imperial Legislative Council 1895-1903. Put up a plucky fight for freedom of speech. "He was a shining light of the South Indian political firmament for nearly two decades and though he never had a following or a school of thought behind him, he was a notable personality with a rugged eloquence, all his own" ( Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya ). Died on 28th November 1908.

### *Details of the Session :—*

The Congress received a telegram from General Booth of the Salvation Army wherein he had elaborated a scheme by which the poor, destitute multitudes could be settled on the waste lands of the country. In reply the Congress declared that the sad condition of the starving millions constitutes the primary *raison d'être* of the Congress. It was decided that annual session of the Congress should continue to be held in India till "all necessary reforms have been secured." Due to the General Elections in England, the Congress Session proposed to be held in London in 1892 was postponed. The usual resolutions on the Reform of Legislative Councils, increasing poverty of India, Arms Act and Military Education, Simultaneous examinations, Salt tax, income tax and excise policy. A sum of Rs. 40,000 was sanctioned for the British Committee of the Indian National Congress. Thanks to Dadabhai Naoroji and Sir William Wedderburn for services rendered.

### EIGHTH SESSION-Allahabad-1892.

*President :—W. C. Bonnerji.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Pandit

Bishambhar Nath. General Secretaries : A. O. Hume and P. Ananda Charlu. Delegates : 625.

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

Year after year we have met each meeting vying with its predecessor in the number of delegates attending it, in the sacrifices which the delegates made to attend it, in the energy, zeal and determination with which the business was passed through and the moderation which throughout characterised the proceedings before the Congress. There can be no doubt—say what those who do not view our proceedings with friendly eyes may—that the Congress movement has been a success and a conspicuous success ..... We must go on with our agitation and not stop until we get what we have a right to get ..... The one great evil of the Indian administration is that our rulers are responsible to no one outside their own consciences..... I was right when I said that the administration of criminal justice in this country was most unsatisfactory.

*President :—*

“His utterances were as statesmanlike and far seeing as they were modestly conceived. There was no undue elation but at the same time there was no shrinking from responsibility had none rejoiced more than he at the ample fulfilment of the movement he and his companions had met to inaugurate. Since that eventful day, he had devoted himself to the cause with characteristic thoroughness. As a member of the British Committee of Indian National Congress he displayed the same wisdom and earnestness;

and his advice and guidance had always been of inestimable weight and value to them in their deliberations. The successful career which had placed him at the head of the profession was the result of his industry and perseverance, qualities which distinguished him no less than his fearlessness and love of country. It would be long before they looked upon his like; and they could console themselves with the thought of the bright example he had left behind him" — Dadabhai Naoroji's tribute.

### *Details of the Session:—*

Lord Cross's Indian Councils Act of 1892 had just been put into operation and the Congress, while loyally accepting it, regretted that the Act did not concede the right of election of representatives to the people. Regretted the resolution of the Government of India on the Report of the Public Service Commission and had a petition submitted to the House of Commons. An earnest appeal was made to Government to investigate the hardship created by the Forest Laws in Peninsular India and the hilly tracts of the Punjab. The rules made by the Punjab Government were particularly cruel and unjust and Pandit .Meghan Ram characterised them as "very arbitrary and unworthy of a civilised Government". Thanked the House of Commons for the vigilance "in regard to the recent purity legislation by the Government in India" and protested against "all state regulated immorality in India". The usual resolutions on jury system, separation of executive and judicial functions etc were passed.

## NINTH SESSION—Lahore—1893.

*President:—*Dadabhai Naoroji.

Chairman of the Reception Committee : Sardar Dayal Singh Majithia. General Secretary : A. O. Hume. Delegates : 625.

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

Let us and the Government not live in a fool's paradise or time may bring disasters to both when it is too late to stop them. This poverty is the greatest danger both to us and the rulers. In what shapes and varieties of forms, the disease of poverty may attack the body politic and bring out and aggravate other evils, it is difficult to tell or foresee but there is danger of most serious order..... Let us always remember that we are all children of our mother country. Indeed I have never worked in any other spirit than that I am an Indian and owe duty to my country and all my countrymen. Whether I am a Hindu, a Mohamadan, a Christian, a Parsi or of any other creed, I am above all an Indian. Our country is India. Our nationality is Indian..... We must show that we believe in the justice of our cause by our earnestness and self sacrifice.

*President:—*

“The enthusiasm with which the president of this year's Congress has been received in India was very striking. Mr. Naoroji is not only the first Indian gentleman who has ever been elected to Parliament; he is also an example of

an early career of high promise being overshadowed by long frustrations in middle life and realised after unwearied perseverance, in advanced age. The brilliant young student and Professor of Elphinstone College who left Bombay to seek high fortunes in England in 1855 was received back last month with the weight of sixty eight years and of a great family sorrow. He had a welcome on landing such as has only on one occasion been rivalled even by a Viceregal ovation. His reception at Lahore has perhaps not been surpassed since the days of Ranjit Singh. It is for him and his colleagues to direct wisely the new influence which the Congress Party has acquired in the House of Commons and in the Indian Legislative Council"—Sir William Hunter in the 'Times'.

### *Details of the Session:—*

The question of the Medical service received the attention of the Congress for the first time and a suitable resolution passed. Felt that the combination of judicial and executive functions constituted "one of the greatest stigmas on British rule in India, one fraught with incalculable oppression to all classes of the community throughout the country" and "expressed its sense of hopelessness of any other redress" and "entreated the Secretary of State to order the immediate appointment in each province of Committees to prepare suitable schemes in this behalf." Protested against the closing of the Indian mints to private coinage of silver as also against a system of State regulated immorality practised in the Indian cantonments, which had been dragged into light by a Purity Society in England. It was at this Congress that Rajah Rampal Singh declared

that "the English civilians made India their happy hunting ground". The usual resolutions were also passed.

### TENTH SESSION-Madras-1894.

*President:—*Alfred Webb.

Chairman of the Reception Committee: P. Rangiah Naidu. General Secretary: A. O. Hume. Delegates: 1163.

#### *Extract from Presidential Address:—*

You have every reason to be proud of what you have achieved.....You must not be cooled by temporary discouragements, by the unfaithfulness of some, the want of faith of the many. Reform progresses like the steady rise of the tide through many an ebb and flow of the waves. Confident are we that through all storm and cloud, the sun of constitutional liberty will yet shine with pure and beneficent effulgence upon your country. Let it be your individual care to carry back from these Congresses into every day life and every day occupations, true elevation of mind, belief in your future and your own power to mould your future. This future depends more upon yourselves than upon any political or financial changes. Before all, you must cultivate a spirit of generous toleration and of charity between class and class and creed and creed.

*President:—*

The parallel between the Irish fight for freedom and the Indian struggle for Swaraj is too obvious. Alfred Webb was

a connecting link between these two great movements. Born an Irishman, his sympathies went out towards all exploited countries and naturally therefore took great interest in India. He was a member of the British House of Commons. Dadabhai Naoroji and W. C. Bonnerji were then enlisting the cooperation of members of Parliament and under their pressure, Webb came out to India and presided over the session of the Indian National Congress held at Madras in 1898. Later on he was too much preoccupied with the Irish struggle. All the same, he was elected a member of the All India Congress Committee in 1900. Died 1908.

### *Details of the Session:—*

This session was marked by considerable excitement over the question of two fresh imposts proposed to be laid on the already overburdened tax payer. One was called a counter-vailing excise duty on Indian cotton manufactures evidently introduced under pressure from Lancashire. The other was the levy of an arbitrary penalty in the shape of costs of punitive police forces quartered in disturbed areas under an amendment of the Indian Police Act of 1861. Both these came in for severe criticism as also the imposition of water cess. Speaking on Exchange Compensation allowance, Lala Murlidhar in mordant satire declared "You should thank heaven that you have been placed in this desirable position, that the doors of heaven have been opened to you while they have been shut against all the people of Europe." Condemned in strong words the gagging of the press in States under British administration.



## ELEVENTH SESSION-Poona-1895.

*President:* **Surendra Nath Banerjea.**

Chairman of the Reception Committee: V. M. Bhide.  
General Secretaries: A. O. Hume and D. E. Wacha.  
Delegates 1584.

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

But the subjective triumphs of the Congress—its moral victories—are even more remarkable than its outward achievements. You have infused a new enthusiasm into your countrymen. You have brought together the scattered element of a vast and diversified population, you have welded them into a compact and homogeneous mass, you have made them vibrate with the new born sentiment of an awakened nationality—you have unified them for the common purpose of their political enfranchisement..... The man of earnest faith is irresistible and all conquering. We Congressmen know what we are about; we know our minds, we know our methods; we stick to them with resolute tenacity of purpose—with a faith which so far as some of us are concerned, I will say, does not belong to the things of this world. And who will say that the future is not ours ?.....Dissatisfaction is the parent of all progress. It stirs us on to ceaseless activity for the betterment of our race. A golden age is indeed looming in the future. There is a golden age in store for us and our children. It is this feeling which reconciles us to the present.

*President :—*

Born in 1848. Entered the Indian Civil Service and was posted as Magistrate and Collector of Sylhet in 1871.

After a brief career of 3 years, was dismissed from service. Professor of English in the Metropolitan Institute, 1878. Later founded the Ripon College and conducted it for many years. Prominent member of the Indian Association. Opposed Lytton's Vernacular Press Act of 1878. Extensive tour of India. Went to England in 1890 on Congress deputation. Member, Bengal Legislative Council 1893-1901. Editor, Bengalee. President, Indian National Congress at Poona, 1895 and again at Ahmedabad, 1902. As an orator he was unsurpassed. Though bitterly opposed to Bengal partition, yet disapproved of the boycott movement. Sided with the Moderates in the Congress split at Surat in 1907. Member, Imperial Legislative Council. Left the Congress after 1919 and joined the Liberal Federation. Accepted the Montague Chelmsford Reforms and became Minister for Self-Government. Knighted in 1921. Framed and passed the Calcutta Municipal Act in 1923. Defeated by a Swarajist in the elections of 1923. Wrote his memoirs entitled "A Nation in Making." Died on 6th August 1925.

### *Details of the Session:—*

The country was threatened with another very reactionary measure. The Legal practitioners Bill was introduced in the Supreme Legislative Council by which provincial lawyers were sought to be completely subordinated to the District Judges and Revenue Commissioners. The Congress entered its emphatic protest against the proposed bill. The Government was urged to bring about an early redress of the grievances of third class passengers. The usual resolutions passed at the previous Congresses were reiterated. Condemned as retrograde the action of

the Government of India in nominating to the Supreme Legislative Council a representative of the Central Provinces without consulting local bodies. Protested against the disabilities of Indians in South Africa. Declared that the cost of wars outside India should not be borne only by the Indian tax payer.

## TWELFTH SESSION-Calcutta-1896.

*President:—Rahimatullah M. Sayani.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter. General Secretaries: A. O. Hume and D. E. Wacha. Delegates: 784.

### *Extract from Presidential Address:—*

The origin of the Congress was thus an epoch in the history of the country and with the establishment of the Congress began a new era in the political history of India and during the years that have followed, the movement has extended from a comparatively few persons to the whole of the educated classes and has already begun to agitate the masses and if it is guided in the future, as it has been guided in the past, by moderation, prudence and sagacity is bound to have a decisive influence on the destinies of British India. The Congress is now favoured with the presence of about two thousand members from as many hundred places, all speaking the sober second thoughts of the people—indeed the collective wisdom of the united, educated and thinking portion of British India..... Keeping aloof from the Congress movement is not only undesirable but may even merit censure.

*President :—*

Born 5th April 1847. Went in for higher education, despite discouragement and opposition. Passed M. A. of Bombay University 1866. Passed his L.L.B. 1870 and the same year was appointed Justice of the Peace and Fellow of the Bombay University. Later member of the Syndicate. Elected to the Bombay Corporation, 1876. Elected President of the Corporation, 1888. Secretary and later Vice President of the Anjuman-i-Islam. Became the first Mahomedan Sheriff of Bombay, 1885. Appointed a member of the Bombay Legislative Council, 1888. President, Provincial Conference, Ahmedabad 1893. President, Indian National Congress, Calcutta 1896. Elected to the Imperial Legislative Council, 1896. Took prominent part in the debates on the Epidemic Diseases Act, Amendment of the Criminal Procedure Code and the Seditious Meetings Act. Budget speeches also note—worthy. Died 4th June 1902.

*Details of the Session:—*

1896 was a year of disasters. Plague made its first appearance and famine also broke out. Mr. Ranade said it appeared as if the seven plagues had been let loose upon India. But these calamities did not prevent the Congress from congratulating Queen Victoria on her Diamond Jubilee. The famine however could not be forgotten. The Congress condemned the provisions of the existing famine code as inadequate as regards wages and rations and oppressive as regards work. Appealed for restoration of the Famine Insurance Fund. Entered its emphatic protest against the

manner in which the Government of India was blocking the way of private relief. Opined that no Indian Prince or chief should be deposed until a Public Tribunal was convinced of their maladministration or misconduct. Demanded a place for Indians in the Executive Councils of Bombay and Madras. Referred to the Land Revenue problem and, adopting the usual temporizing policy, prayed for at least an interval of sixty years from one revision to another.

### THIRTEENTH SESSION—Amraoti—1897.

*President*:—C. Sankaran Nair.

Chairman of Reception Committee: G. S. Khaparde.  
General Secretaries: A. O. Hume and D. E. Wacha.  
Delegates: 692.

#### *Extract from Presidential Address:—*

The poverty of the country reveals itself to us in every direction in, every shape and form. It shows itself in the poor condition of the labouring population and of the great majority of ryots who are underfed and who are without not only the comforts but even the absolute necessities of life and who lead a life of penury and toil, unredeemed by any hope. Years of subjection, nay we may even say servitude, have sapped the strength of the Indian nation, dwarfed its growth and stripped it of all that was grand and noble in it, and if India is ever to occupy a better position than she fills at the present moment and take her proper place in the scale of nations, it must be entirely due to the zealous

efforts of her educated and enlightened sons. Let *nil desperandum* be our motto; let no insidious smile or angry frown deter us from following the straight path of duty; and with the welfare and progress of our land as our end and aim, let us endeavour under a solemn sense of our responsibility as well as loyalty to our country, to bring about that glorious future which must inevitably crown our efforts.

*President:—*

Born 11th July 1857. Enrolled as a High Court Vakil 1880. Interested in journalism and conducted the Madras Review. Associated with Madras Law Journal. Secretary, Devasthanam Committee. Fellow of the Madras University 1889. Nominated to Madras Legislative Council, 1890. President, Indian National Congress, Amraoti 1897. Advocate General, 1907. Permanent Judge of Madras High Court, 1908. Presided over the National Social Conference 1908. Appointed Education Member in Vice-regal Executive Council, 1915. Resigned his post as a protest against Panjab atrocities. Opposed non-cooperation and wrote "Gandhi and Anarchy" Sir Michael O'Dwyer filed libel suit. Justice McCardie gave judgment against Nair, awarding £500 damages and £20,000 costs. President, All Parties Conference, 1921. Member of the Council of State Since 1920. Cooperated with the Simon Commission and was the President of the Central Indian Committee to assist the Simon Commission. An ardent social reformer throughout life. Died 24th April 1934.

*Details of the Session:—*

It was a reactionary year in every sense. Lokamanya Tilak had been convicted for sedition. Sardars Natu Brothers were deported under Regulation XXV of 1827. Punitive police quartered in Poona. Steps for amending the Law of Sedition and of spreading false alarms so as to make those sections in the penal code even more stringent. The Congress duly protested against these invasions of popular rights. Surendranath Banerjea thundered, "For Mr. Tilak, my heart is full of sympathy, my feelings go forth to him in his prison house. A Nation is in tears." Urged the repeal of the Bombay Regulation as also the Madras Regulation II of 1819 and the Bengal Regulation III of 1818. Protested against the Criminal Procedure Bill. Regretted that right of interpellation had been denied to members of the Panjab Legislative Council. Requested that Berar should be legislated for by the Supreme Legislative Council. Wanted the scope of the Famine Commission to be widened.

**FOURTEENTH SESSION—Madras—1898**

*President :—Ananda Mohan Bose.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: N. Subba Row Pantulu. General Secretaries: A. O. Home and D. E. Wacha. Delegates: 614

*Extract from Presidential Address :—*

At length has India awakened from the stupor of ages,

but yet not wholly extinguished and waiting but the breeze of manly effort and kindly help to burn once again in the time to come, let us hope, with the splendour and lustre as of old. Lord Salisbury spoke the other day of the living and the dying nations of the world. Shall India, Brother delegates, be a living nation, shall the glories that were hers, remain for ever a memory of the past or shall they once again be realities in the time before us? On us, Brother delegates, depends the answer, on our efforts, on the lives we live and the sacrifices we make.....Hear we, my friends, the trumpet call of duty resounding to us amid the stirring scenes. Yes, the call sounds clear but let our hearts gather the strength to respond to that call and to be true to her, our common Mother, the Land of our birth; to be true and faithful to the light that is within us and to every noble impulse that stirs within us.

*President:—*

Born in 1846. Brilliant academic career. After serving a short term as Professor of Mathematics in the Engineering College, proceeded to England. President, Cambridge Union. Called to the bar and returned to India, 1874. High degree of success in mofussil practice. Invested in Assam Tea Industry. A prominent Tea Estate owner. Fellow of the Calcutta University, 1877. Syndic of the faculty of Arts, 1878. Offered the Presidentship of the Education Commission of 1882 but refused. Nominated to the Bengal Legislative Council in 1886, but elected by the University, 1895. Ardent Brahmo. Minister, New Sadharan Samaj and its President for many years. Left for Germany, 1897. Did valuable work in England. President,



Indian National Congress, Madras, 1898. Health broke down soon after and hence retired from public life. Borne on a stretcher to lay the foundation stone of the Federation Hall which was to epitomise Bengalee feeling against Partition. Broke down at the meeting and died soon after.

*Details of the Session:—*

The Congress started by welcoming Lord Curzon who had just become the Viceroy of India. Emphasised the view that Forest Laws were meant not as sources of revenue but only to conserve the forests and complained against the rules which worked a great hardship on the people. A renewed effort was made to frame a constitution for the Congress. A draft constitution was circulated and a committee was appointed to consider it and submit a definite scheme at the next session. Secret Press Committees established in the year evoked a vehement protest from Mr. W. A. Chamber and the resolution was seconded by N. C. Kelkar who spoke against "the hateful institution of the Press Committees which are only a thinly veiled Press Censorship and as such a distinct disgrace to British India." Wanted plague expenditure to be borne by the Government and not charged to the funds of the local bodies.

**FIFTEENTH SESSION—Lucknow—1899.**

*President:—Romesh Chunder Dutta.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Babu Bansilal Singh. General Secretaries: A. O. Hume and D. E. Wacha. Delegates: 789.

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

A constitutional battle so fought is not fought in vain and our children and our children's children, to whom we shall hand down the heritage of a loyal and constitutional agitation for self government under the Imperial and progressive rule of England, will look upon the closing of the nineteenth century as an epoch in the history of the land and will draw new inspiration from the example of the men of this century who have lived and worked and fought not in vain. There are defeats which are more glorious than victories; and the defeat which we have sustained will strengthen our hearts, freshen our hopes and nerve our hands for new endeavours.....The real cause of the wretchedness and indebtedness is that the land assessment is so heavy that the cultivator is not able to save in good years enough to meet the failure of harvests in bad years.

*President:—*

Born 13th August 1848. Sailed for England, 1868. Competed for and entered the I. C. S., 1869. Returned to India via France, Germany, Switzerland and Italy, 1871. Served as a junior officer 1871-1883. Good work during Bengal famine 1874. Published "The Peasantry of Bengal," 1875. Appointed District Officer 1883. Divisional Commissioner 1894, first Indian to hold that post. Resigned from I. C. S. 1897. Published a history of the literature of Bengal 1877. Translation of Rig Veda 1886. The history of Civilization in Ancient India 1889. Lived in England, 1897-1904. Lecturer in Indian History at the University College, London. Great Epics of Ancient India, 1898. President, Indian National Congress, Lucknow 1899. Was an authority on

economic and agrarian problems. Returned to India in 1904 and entered the service of the Baroda State first as Revenue Minister and later as Diwan. Member of the Royal Commission on Decentralisation 1907. Placed his services at the disposal of Morley when latter was shaping his reforms. Was a moderate. Died 30th November 1909.

*Details of the Session :—*

The Natu Brothers who had been imprisoned since 1897 without trial were released. Lord Curzon had become the Viceroy and had started inflicting on the country in almost breathless succession one contentious measure after another to which the Congress took the strongest exception. Protested against the Punjab Land Alienation Bill and the Foreign Telegraphic Press Messages Bill. Considered the Calcutta Municipal Act seriously jeopardised the principles of Local Self Government. Protested against the Government circular prohibiting teachers of aided institutions from taking part in politics or attending public meetings. Lala Lajpat Rai pressed the Congress to devote half a day for the consideration of educational and industrial subjects and a committee was appointed in that behalf. Considered the famine and urged on the Government to stop the drain of wealth and curtail public expenditure, to moderate taxes and to develop local industries.

**SIXTEENTH SESSION—Lahore—1900.**

*President :—N. G. Chandavarkar.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Rai Kali Prassanna Roy Bahadur. General Secretaries; A. O. Hume and D. E. Wacha. Delegates: 567.

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

The Indian ryot is neither a sinner nor a saint in his business—he is neither stupid nor perfect. It is no use teaching him to give up his methods of cultivation wholesale. He is wiser than his teachers there.....After all, the talkers may not be altogether a useless class. In every country, the talkers precede the actors at every stage of its progress..... The excise duty levied on the Bombay Mill industry clearly shows that under the present policy, no Indian industry will be allowed to outgrow European competition.....There is a general tendency for the cost of the administration of the country to increase and it is a danger to be guarded against. If the country progressed in a corresponding measure it will not much matter but the country does not.....While the prosperity of the nation has been practically at a standstill, the expenditure has grown by leaps and bounds.

*President:—*

Born in 1855. Graduated in 1877 and took to journalism. Editor, *Indu Prakash* 1878–1889. Studied law and enrolled 1881. Successful lawyer. Went on Congress deputation to England, 1885. Fellow of the Bombay University 1886 and Justice of the Peace 1889. Ardent Brahmo and mainstay of Prarthana Samaj. President, Madras Hindu Social Reform Association anniversary and Provincial Conference, Karachi 1896. Elected to Bombay Legislative Council by University, 1897. Re-elected 1899. President, Indian National Congress, Lahore 1900. Appointed Judge of the Bombay High Court 1901. Acted as Chief Justice 1909. Invited to Delhi Darbar as a guest

of the Viceroy. Knighted 1910. Diwan of Indore 1914. Vice Chancellor, Bombay University. Accepted the Montague Chelmsford Reforms and became the first President of the Bombay Legislative Council. A keen social reformer. Died at Bangalore in May 1923.

*Details of the Session:—*

Deplored the exclusion of Indians from the higher branches of the Services and also the restriction of eligibility for appointment through the Cooper's Hill College of Engineering only to two. The incorporation of the former Boer republics in the British Dominions was considered as obviating the one difficulty the Government had to contend against in dealing with the independent Boers and the Congress urged that the immigration restrictions in Natal and the Dealer's Licenses Acts of the colony should be done away with. The Indian Congress Committee of 45 was enlarged by the addition to it of certain exofficio members including the ex-Presidents of the Congress. The Congress of 1899 had passed a resolution condemning the Panjab Land Alienation Bill which was then before the Supreme Legislative Council. The Bill had since been passed into law. The session postponed the discussion of the question so as to watch its working for a year, since the Hindu and Muslim delegates disagreed on it. This was in pursuance of the restrictive clause in the constitution.

**SEVENTEENTH SESSION—Calcutta-1901.**

*President:—Dinshaw Eduljee Wacha.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Maharaj Bahadur Jogadendra Nath Roy of Natore. General Secretaries: A. O. Hume and D. E. Wacha. Delegates: 896.

*Extract from Presidential Address :—*

As a matter of fact, I am one of those who think that the chill penury of the land has to a certain extent repressed even the mental faculty.....It freezes the currents which ought to flow. The mournful truth must be acknowledged that slow rises the country which is depressed by poverty, which has for its root political cause. But having said so much, we should not despair. Be the causes of India's economic condition what they may, we are bound to put our shoulders to the wheel. It would not do to cry over the past. It is more manful to tuck up our sleeves, gird up our loins and work like heroes to regenerate our country by arts and industries and raise it once more to a zenith of prosperity. There are undoubtedly formidable lions in our path, the foreign exploiters and the monopolists in place and power; but we need not be deterred by them. We cannot allow ourselves to lie in the Slough of Despondency or take up a permanent residence in the Castle of Giant Despair.

*President:—*

Born 2nd August 1844. Interested in Cotton industry since 1874. Corporator for 30 years. Member, Mill Owners' Association for 45 years. Member, Improvement Trust 1898-1919. Associated with the Congress from inception. Joint General Secretary of Congress 1896-1913. President Indian National Congress, Calcutta 1901. Secretary, Bombay Presidency Association 1885-1915, and President 1915-1918. Member, Bombay Legislative Council, 1915-16. and of Imperial Legislative Council 1916-1920. Governor of the Imperial Bank of India 1920. Left the Congress after

1918. President, Western India Liberal Association 1919-1927. President Bombay Provincial Liberal Conference 1922. Member of the Council of State since 1920. During the early days of the Congress, earned a reputation as the Firebrand of the Congress. But lived to become a moderate, a Knight and a confidant of the British Government. None to excel him for mastery of facts, versatility of talents and intimate knowledge of obscure questions and vague problems. Died 18th February 1936.

*Details of the Session :—*

Remarkable for the interest it evoked in the question of immigration in Assam and the melancholy meanness of the Government of India in postponing relief to the indentured abourers in the tea estates. With a view to meet the deficit of the expenses of the Congress organ "India" and of the British Committee, the delegate fee was raised from Rs. 10 to Rs. 20. Demanded the appointment of an Indian on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. A committee consisting of Tilak, Malaviya and seven others was constituted to go into the economic condition of India. Requested the establishment of a government College of mining. Agricultural conditions were also considered and the Government was requested to give effect to the recommendations of Dr. Voelekar who came out to India in 1889 and to establish experimental farms all over the country.

**EIGHTEENTH SESSION—Ahmedabad—1902.**

**President : Surendra Nath Banerjea.**

Chairman of the Reception Committee : Dewan Bahadur Ambalal Sakarlal Desai. General Secretaries : A. O. Hume and D. E. Wacha. Delegates : 471.

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

We are yet in the midst of our journey, our long, long journey through the dreary wilderness which is to carry us to the Promised Land. Many will not enter Canaan. Some choice spirits have already fallen in the grand march. Many more will yet fall before the journey is accomplished and the darkness of night gives place to the dawning of the new day. But the faith that is in us is strong and the hope that inspires us is proof against all disappointments, all reverses. We have an undying faith as strong as ever inspired a prophet or a priest, that the cause to which we are pledged will, in the ordering of Providence, triumph over all difficulties, outlive all prejudices, leading us onward and upward, inspiring at each stage a loftier devotion and developing a truer manhood, until the regenerated man claims and asserts his political franchise as at once his birthright and the just tribute of his higher nature. For myself, I believe the Congress has a divine mission .....Is there a holier Dharma, a nobler religion, a diviner mandate than that which enjoins that our most sacred duty, which has a paramountcy over all others, is the duty which we owe to the Land of our birth.

*President:—*

"In the Valhalla of Indian politicians, there lies in a prominent niche the spirit of Surendra Nath Banerjea hovering over the destinies of India—Surendra Nath who had been for over four decades connected with the Congress and whose trumpet voice resounding from the Congress platform in India reached the farthest recesses of the civilised world. For command of language, for elegance of diction, for a rich imagery, for emotional heights, for a spirit of manly challenge, his orations are hard to beat ; they remain unapproachable. The



spice of his speeches was his avowal of loyalty. He developed this into a fine art. He presided over the Congress twice, first at Poona in 1895 and next at Ahmedabad in 1902. In the kaleidoscopic display of subjects and resolutions that came up before the Congress in successive years there was hardly any he was not feeling himself equal to"—Dr. Pattabhi Sitarammayya.

### *Details of the Session :—*

A new king had ascended the throne at Westminster but India's military woes remained as before. The Congress demanded a division of expenditure between England and India on the ground urged at the Lucknow session in 1899. With a view to meet the deficit of the India Journal, a special delegation fee of Rs. 10 was to be paid in addition to the usual amount with effect from that year. The Government circular on Universities' Commission Report was received and a lengthy resolution was passed. It viewed "with the gravest alarm" many of the recommendations of the Commission and particularised six such objections which were calculated to check the spread and restrict the scope of higher education. The usual resolution on Poverty of India, Indian famine union etc were passed as also the omnibus resolution. Resolved to maintain and continue the British Committee of the Congress and the Journal "India".

### NINETEENTH SESSION—Madras 1903.

*President:* Lal Mohan Ghose.

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Nawab Syed Mahomed Bahadur. General Secretaries: A. O. Hume, D. E. Wacha and G. K. Gokhale. Delegates : 538.

*Extract from Presidential Address:-*

Do you think that any administration in England or France or the United States would have ventured to waste vast sums of money on an empty Pageant, when Famine and Pestilence were stalking over the land and the Angel of Death was flapping his wings almost within hearing of the light hearted revellers.....As to the masses of the people, nothing could possibly seem more utterly heartless than the spectacle of a great Government imposing the heaviest taxation upon the poorest population in the world and then lavishly spending the money so obtained over fireworks and pompous pageants while millions of the poor were dying of starvation.....But if, nowadays we are free from the ravages of lawless hordes, if we are no longer subject to the pillage and rapine and slaughter, of domestic strife and struggles for ascendancy between rival princes and chiefs, we cannot forget that there is another side to the balance sheet. After all it makes but little difference whether millions of lives are lost on account of war and anarchy or whether the same result is brought about by famine and starvation.

*President.--*

Born 17th December 1849. Was called to the bar in 1873 and returned to India to practise at Calcutta. Delegate of the Indian Association to represent the Indian view of the question of the I. C. S. examination in England, 1879. Reception on return, 1880. Left again for England to represent the wants of India. Made a reputation as a most eloquent and powerful speaker. Participated in Ilbert Bill controversy and made a speech which has since become classic. Left for

England to enter Parliament. Twice contested the Deptford seat as a liberal but failed. Liberals of Deptford presented him an address. Returned to India in 1884 and resumed practice. Sat on the Reformed Councils of 1892 as the representative of the Presidency group of Municipalities. President, Indian National Congress, Madras, 1903. Latterly he retired from active politics and took to literature. Tried to translate in metrical English the well known Bengali poem "Meghanand Bodh." Many of his literary papers were published posthumously. Died in 1909.

### *Details of the Session:—*

Lord Curzon's reactionary Universities Bill had been published. The Congress protested against the measure and declared it would completely destroy the independence of the Universities. Protested against the Official Secrets Bill as "uncalled for, against the interests of the public, dangerous to individual liberty and retrograde in policy." Again, it appeared at the time that more British troops were to be saddled on India. The Congress took a comprehensive view of the situation and recalling how the Army Amalgamation Scheme of 1859 had worked hardship on India, attacked the military policy of Britain in India as really an Imperial policy for which England must pay its quota especially in view of the fact that the British troops in India forming as they did an Imperial garrison, amounted to a third of the whole British Army. On the Land Revenue question, this session went further than the previous ones and sought judicial and legislative restrictions on overassessments.

## TWENTIETH SESSION-Bombay-1904.

*President:—*Sir Henry Cotton.

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Sir Pheroze-shah Mehta. General Secretaries: A. O. Hume, D. E. Wacha and G. K. Gokhale. Delegates : 1010.

*Extract from Presidential Address :—*

We have good grounds for hope. The foundations of the future have been laid and a superstructure is arising upon them. Skill, care and forethought are needed; enthusiasm, tempered by prudence in the construction of the edifice, liberality and largeness of conception in the design. You are the nucleus of a movement the power of which grows every day and already supplies the most potent impulse in inspiring, instructing and controlling the varied forces upon which the future of India depends.....The growth of an Indian nation is the great political revolution that is working before our eyes.....Relax not your efforts for the waves of progress are irresistibly dashing against the backwater of prejudice. It is not within the power of the man to obstruct the tide of progress otherwise than for a time by a policy of reaction.....The prosperity of your country depends upon the diminution of its economic drain.

*President :—*

Born at Bombay 13th Sept. 1845. Educated in England. Entered the Indian Civil Service 1867. Was District Magistrate at Midnapore for 11 years. Held several

responsible posts such as Collector, Secretary of Board of Revenue, President of Calcutta Corporation, Chief Secretary and Home Member to the Government of Bengal. He retired from the I. C. S. as Chief Commissioner of Assam. In 1892 he was made a C. S. I. and was knighted soon after. Had published his 'New India' in 1885. Serious differences of opinion with Lord Curzon and pronounced sympathies for India stood in the way of his becoming a Governor. President, Indian National Congress, Bombay 1904. He it was that visualised the ideal of the federated states of India for the first time. He was elected to the House of Commons in 1905. Died in 1915.

### *Details of the Session:—*

Lord Curzon's forward policy in Tibet was in operation. Though he had described his Tibetan expedition as a political mission he had incurred expenditure thereon without the express sanction of Parliament as was required by the statute of 1858 under which Indian revenues should not be spent without such sanction outside the statutory limits of British India, except to repel foreign aggression. The Congress protested against this act of Lord Curzon's and also pointed out how the military expenditure was growing and becoming unbearable on account of Lord Kitchener's army reorganisation scheme at an additional cost of £ 10 millions. It was decided to send a deputation to England on the eve of the General Elections to Parliament. The proposals for the partition of Bengal had been published and the Congress recorded its emphatic protest against the proposed measure.

## TWENTYFIRST SESSION—Benares—1905.

*President:—Gopal Krishna Gokhale.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Hon. Munshi Madhav Lal. General Secretaries: A. O. Hume, D. E. Wacha and G. K. Gokhale. Delegates: 756.

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

We have now been a hundred years under England's rule and yet today four villages out of every five are without a school house and seven children out of eight are allowed to grow up in ignorance and in darkness. Militarism, service interests and the interests of capitalists—all take precedence today of the true interests of the Indian people in the administration of the country. Things cannot be otherwise, for it is the Government of the people of one country by the people of another and this, as Mill points out, is bound to produce great evils. Now the Congress wants that all this should change and that India should be governed first and foremost in the interests of the Indians themselves... . The domination of one race over another especially when there is no great disparity between their intellectual endowment or their general civilisation inflicts great injury on the subject race in a thousand insidious ways. On the moral side, the present situation is steadily destroying our capacity for initiative and dwarfing us as men of action. On the material side it has resulted in a fearful impoverishment of the people.

*President :—*

Born 9th May 1866. Joined the Deccan Education Society in 1884 as Professor of English in the Fergusson

College. Came under the influence of Mahadev Govind Ranade who made him one of the secretaries of the Sarvajanic Sabha, Poona. Tilak - Agarkar struggle in the Deccan Education Society, 1889-1891 ending in Tilak leaving the Society. Attended the Congress of 1890 and spoke against the Salt Tax. Went to England in 1896 to give evidence before the Welby Commission. While in England, made charges against the Bombay Government regarding their measures in connection with the plague in Poona. On return to India, apologised to the Government. Elected to the Bombay Legislative Council in 1899. In 1902 was elected to the Imperial Legislative Council and remained so till his death. In the council earned a name as an incisive thinker and trenchant speaker. President, Indian National Congress, Benares 1905. From 1907 was the leading exponent of the Moderate School. Took great interest in the cause of Indians in South Africa. Went to Africa and met Gandhiji. Died 19th February 1915.

### *Details of the Session:—*

The Bengal Partition had been carried out in the teeth of universal opposition. The Nationalists led by Tilak and Lalaji wanted the Congress to boycott the visit of the then Prince of Wales. Gokhale and Surendranath opposed the move and the Congress offered welcome to the Prince. The session lodged its protest against the partition and asked for its annulment. The principal topic of contention was the question of boycott of British goods. It was left very vague. Only an academic opinion was expressed that it was perhaps the only legitimate weapon left to the people. Gopal Krishna Gokhale was deputed to England

to urge the Congress proposals on the authorities. A standing committee composed of 15 members was appointed to promote the objects of the Congress and to implement its resolutions during the year. Protested that disabilities not enforced under the Boer rule should have been enforced under British rule in South Africa and asked for prohibition of Indentured Labour.

## TWENTYSECOND SESSION—Calcutta—1906.

*President :—Dadabhai Naoroji.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Dr. Rash Behari Ghose. General Secretaries: A. O. Hume, D. E. Wacha and G. K. Gokhale. Delegates: 1663.

### *Extract from Presidential Address:—*

In any movement, great or small, you must persevere to the end. You cannot stop at any stage, disappointments notwithstanding, or you lose all you have gained and find it far more difficult afterwards even to begin again. As we proceed, we may adopt such means as may be suitable at every stage, but persevere we must to the end. If our cause is good and just, as it is, we are sure to triumph in the end.....This meddling wrongly with economic things is the whole evil from which India suffers and the only remedy for it is—political principles are after all the root of our national greatness, strength and hope. And these political principles are summed up in self-government. Self-government is the only and chief remedy. In self government lies our hope, strength and greatness.



*President:—*

“The spirit of boycott pervaded the atmosphere of the Congress. Babu Bipin Chandra Pal gave an extended application to the word boycott and interdicted all association with the Government. Provinces other than Bengal sought to exempt themselves from the operation of the resolution on Boycott. Swadeshi, which was its obverse meant various things to various people. To Malaviya, it meant the protection of indigenous industries; to Tilak, it meant self-help, determination and sacrifice on the part of the nation in order to end the sad spectacle of the middle classes using foreign goods. To Lalaji, it meant the conserving of Capital. But to Dadabhai himself, the spirit of the times echoed itself in a cry for economic and educational reform and the spread of education created the craving for Swaraj. The “Englishman” fell foul of this old man of eighty coming from a distance of 6000 miles and adding the new slogan of “Swaraj” to the existing ones of Swadeshi, Boycott and National Education. The way was preparing itself for a clarification of the Indian demand.”  
Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya.

*Details of the Session:—*

Dadabhai Naoroji was brought from England to preside so as to set off the growing strength of the Nationalist element. Strongly condemned the Bengal Partition and declared that “the Boycott Movement inaugurated in Bengal by way of protest against the Partition was and is legitimate.” The resolution on Swadeshi urged the encouragement of Indian industries even at some sacrifice. There was a resolution on

National Education. And the President had already given the mantra of Swaraj. But the conception of that Swaraj or self government did not travel farther than the formulation of certain Reforms comprising simultaneous examinations, expanded Legislative Councils with effective popular representation and the appointment of Indians to the India Council and the Executive Councils. Pointed out how the military expenditure had nearly doubled from 17 crores to 32 crores within twenty years.

## TWENTYTHIRD SESSION-Surat-1907.

(Suspended)

*President:—*Dr. Rash Behari Ghose.

Chairman of the Reception Committee : Tribhuvandas N. Malvi.

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

And I can affirm with equal confidence that however beneficent a foreign rule may be, no people in whom all manhood had not been killed out will ever willingly submit for ever to the yoke though it may be wreathed with flowers.....The "brightest jewel in the British crown" must not be regarded merely as a market for British goods or a field for the safe investment of British capital or as opening a dignified career to "our boys" .....We look at the achievements of Japan in less than fifty years. We look at Persia, we look at China and our minds are filled with

despair. We cannot any longer be fed with worn-out platitudes; and when Mr. Morley deals in them, he forgets that we too may claim to have kindled our modest rush lights at Burke and Mill's benignant lamps. We too know the painful journey that lies before us before we can be welded into the political unity of a nation. Long, long is the way, rugged is the ground and the weary steps must be trodden with bleeding feet, with bleeding knees and with bleeding hearts. But do not, we pray you, stand with a drawn sword to impede our journey.

*President:—*

Born 23rd December 1845. Enrolled in the Calcutta High Court 1867. Soon reached the top of the profession. Law examiner of the Calcutta University 1877. Fellow of University 1879. Doctor of Laws, 1884. Member of the University Syndicate 1887. Member of the Bengal Legislative Council, 1889. Member of the Imperial Legislative Council 1891 and again 1893. President of the Faculty of Law of Calcutta University 1893-1895. C. I. E. 1896. Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Calcutta session of the Congress, 1906. President, Indian National Congress, Surat 1907. The session ended in disorder. President, Indian National Congress, Madras 1908. Gave large donations to Calcutta University. Member of Congress delegation to England, 1917. Presided over Joint session of the All India Congress Committee and of the Council of Muslim League at Calcutta in 1917 to protest against internment of Mrs. Besant. President of the Board of Trustees to manage the "India" magazine. Died 28th January 1921.

*Details of the Session:—*

The Congress was to have been held at Nagpur but there were serious local differences and the venue was changed to Surat by the A. I. C. C. The extremists led by Tilak and B. C. Pal wanted that Lala Lajput Rai should preside over the session but Lalaji declined the honour. The session was postponed by a few hours due to the death of a delegate from Sind. The Chairman of the Reception Committee then read his address. The name of Dr. Rash Behari Ghose was proposed by Ambalal Desai and Surendranath Banerjea seconded it. Disturbances started. Pourparlers between extremist and moderate leaders. Extremists keen on resolutions on Swaraj, Boycott and National Education. Moderates wanted to water them down. No meeting ground. Tilak wanted to address the Congress. Dr. Ghose started reading his presidential address. Confusion and shouting. Shoes hurled at Surendranath and Mehta. General melee. Blows exchanged. Congress adjourned.

**TWENTYTHIRD SESSION—Madras—1908.**

*President:—*Dr. Rash Behari Ghose.

Chairman of the Reception Committee: V. Krishnaswami Iyer. General Secretaries: D. E. Wacha and D. A. Khare. Delegates: 617.

*Extract from Presidential Address :—*

We know that our hopes are not likely to be realised in a day. We know that for years we may not have even a Pisgah sight of the Promised Land. But to blot out the ideal is,

according to the Greek saying, to take the spring from out of year. It is at once our solace and our inspiration, our pole star to guide us. We know that in the struggle, we shall suffer many defeats. But they are defeats which do not involve any disgrace. These are repulses which carry no humiliation. And if ever we are seized with despondency, we shall not forget that in a national movement, endurance itself is a victory and the keeping alive of the national spirit is itself an end. Our triumph may be remote but depend upon it, we can never suffer permanent defeat. And we are determined to fight the good fight with unextinguishable faith, with unwavering hope and strenuous patience.

### *Details of the Session:—*

The convention of moderate leaders at Allahabad in April drew up a constitution for the Congress which practically excluded the nationalists. The first Congress under this convention was held at Madras. The number of delegates had come down. It was a Moderate show. The Congress began to rejoice over the coming reforms before time for it and gave a most hearty and unqualified welcome to the Reform proposals. The resolutions on Swadeshi and National Education were watered down. The boycott resolution was conspicuous by its absence. But protested against a fresh burden of £300,000 which the British War Office had imposed on the Indian Exchequer on the recommendation of the House Committee and urged upon the British Government the necessity of revising the Army Amalgamation Scheme of 1859 and the desirability of laying down a fair and reasonable principle which should free the Indian exchequer from unjust exactions of this character.

## TWENTYFOURTH SESSION-Lahore-1909.

*President* :—**Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.**

**General Secretaries:** D. E. Wacha and D. A. Khare. **Delegates:** 243

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

The condition of our people is deplorable. Vast millions of them do not get sufficient food to eat and sufficient clothing to protect themselves from exposure and cold. They are born and live in insanitary surroundings and die premature preventible deaths. Humanity and patriotism alike demand that in addition to what the Government is doing and may do, we should do all that lies in our power to ameliorate their condition. Let every particle of energy be devoted to the loving service of the Motherland. There is no land on earth which stands more in need of such service than our own. It is true that we are labouring under numerous difficulties and disadvantages. Let not those difficulties and disadvantages daunt us. Duty demands that we must solve them; and let us remember that they will not be solved by having small divisions and narrow parties amongst us. In union alone lies the hope of a happy future for our country.

*President:—*

*(For detailed biography see Part II Page 11.)*

"No one, not even Mahatma Gandhi himself, is dearer to the vast majority of the Hindu public. He has also a great record of devotion to public national service, which

places him very high indeed among those Indian leaders who are still living in our own times. There is in him a bravery of spirit which is equal to his tenderness of heart and his religious faith is as simple as that of a child. Behind all is a personality so attractive that he has won the hearts of millions who have never seen him but have only known his great sacrifices both on behalf of motherland and his Hindu faith"—Deenabandhu Andrews.

"From the day that he made his maiden speech at Calcutta Congress in 1886, continues with unbroken zeal and unabating passion to serve this National Institution, now as a humble worker and now as a leader, now as a whole hogger and now as a part-protestor, now as an opponent of non cooperation and Civil Disobedience and now as a true Satyagrahi and civil resister in the British jails"—Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya.

### *Details of the Session :—*

The Minto Morley Reforms had been just introduced and the Congress session was wholly taken up with the subject. It recorded its disapproval of the creation of separate electorates on the basis of religion. It expressed dissatisfaction at the excessive and unfairly preponderant share of representation given to the Muslims. It urged the creation of Executive Councils in U. P., Punjab, Eastern Bengal and Assam and Burma. Pointed out the unsatisfactory nature of the Reforms regulations for the Punjab. It expressed dissatisfaction at the non-establishment of a council for C. P. and Berars and at the exclusion of the Berars from participation in the election to the Imperial Legislative Council. Commented upon the annually growing

military expenditure. Fund for helping Gandhiji's Passive Resistance movement. Rs. 18,000 collected on the spot. Ratan Tata gave Rs. 25,000 to relieve suffering in South Africa. Usual resolutions were also repeated.

## TWENTYFIFTH SESSION-Allahabad-1910.

*President:—Sir William Wedderburn.*

General Secretaries: D. E. Wacha and D. A. Khare. Delegates : 636.

### *Extract from Presidential Address:—*

Poor India has suffered pains almost beyond human endurance; we have had war, pestilence and famine, earthquake and cyclone; an afflicted people driven well nigh to despair. But now at last we see a gleam of light. Hope has revived, and the time has come to close our ranks and press forward with ordered discipline. There is much arduous work to be done but the reward will be great. In the words of the poet let us "march with our faces to the light; put in the sickle and reap." Our watchwords must be "Hope", "Conciliation", "United Effort".

*President:—*

"The picture of this great and venerable Rishi of modern times is a picture that is too ennobling, too beautiful, too inspiring for words; it is a picture to dwell upon lovingly and reverentially and it is a picture to contemplate in silence"—Gopal Krishna Gokhale.



"Sir William Wedderburn was the life and soul of all Indian work in England. An hereditary servant of India as he loved to call himself, Sir William Wedderburn uniformly acted in sympathy with all classes of Indians during the quarter of a century of his official life in Bombay as an I. C. S. while after retirement, he dedicated to the service of this country every waking moment of the twenty-nine years more given to him in this world. He not only gave his time, he gave freely of his money. Religiously did he set apart the whole of his pension of £ 1,000 per annum derived from the Indian revenues for expenditure on Indian causes and during the twenty-nine years he lived after leaving India, he must have spent several lakhs of rupees on and for us"—Sir C. Y. Chintamani.

### *Details of the Session:—*

The year 1910 found a critical state of affairs on the Communal Front. The President intended to hold a conference between Hindus and Muslims with a view to bring about communal harmony. Separate electorates were just then proposed to be introduced in respect of Municipalities and Local Boards as well. In U. P. the system of joint electorates was working so well that even a reactionary like the Lieutenant Governor Sir John Hewett was against disturbing the amicable relations of the two communities. Mr. Jinnah deprecated the extension of separate electorates to local bodies. The Congress also reiterated the objections and suggestions of 1909 regarding the reforms. The Passive Resistance struggle in South Africa was at its height and Congress expressed "its great

admiration of the intense patriotism courage, and self sacrifice of the Indians in the Transvaal" who were "heroically suffering persecution in the interests of their countrymen."

## TWENTY SIXTH SESSION-CALCUTTA-1911

*President:—***Pandit Bishen Narayan Dhar.**

**General Secretaries:** D. E. Wacha and D. A. Khare.  
**Delegates:** 446.

### *Extract from Presidential Address:—*

The intellectual upheaval of recent times has revealed to us the working of some forces which make for unity; and that man—be he Hindu or Mahomedan, Parsi or European—would be guilty of the greatest disservice to the country, who for the sake of some paltry personal or sectarian advantage would do anything to retard that unifying process, by raising false political issues or by reviving the memories of "old, unhappy, far-off things" over which Time has thrown the curtain of oblivion .....I know that moderation sometimes means indifference, caution and timidity and I hold that India needs bold and enthusiastic characters—not men of pale hopes and middling expectations, but courageous natures, fanatics in the cause of their country, "whose breath is agitation and whose life a storm wherein they ride".....We were a great people once; we shall be a great people again. Patience, courage self sacrifice are needed on our part.

*President :—*

Born in 1864. His uncle was the first Indian High Court Judge at Calcutta. Went to England for studies. Was called to the bar in 1887. Returned to India and set up practice at Calcutta. Attended the Madras Congress of 1887 and made a notable speech which elicited the praise of Hume. Opposed the Arms Act at the 1894 Congress. Member of the Calcutta Municipal Corporation for many years. President, United Provinces Conference at Lucknow in 1908. President, Indian National Congress, Calcutta 1911. Member of the Bengal Legislative Council, 1914. He was so great a writer that many of his writings still live. Sapru called him Rajakshetra Guru and Motilal Nehru named him the Saint of Almora. Was ailing for over twelve years. Was elected Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Congress, Lucknow Session 1916. Died 19th November 1916.

*Details of the Session :—*

The partition of Bengal had been annulled and the capital had been transferred to Delhi. Lord Hardinge's famous despatch of August 25th 1911 acknowledging the supreme claims of provincial autonomy in any scheme of national reconstruction. Abolition of indentured labour in South Africa. Naturally the congress met in a spirit of high jubilation. All the same people could not forget the Seditious Meetings Act, the Press Act and the Criminal Law Amendment Act. There were the century old obsolete Regulation III of 1818 and allied regulations. There were the excise duties on cotton goods manufactured in India. Who could above all forget the political prisoners

notably Lokamanya Tilak, confined in the Fort of Mandalay suffering from diabetes. But it could cordially congratulate "Mr. Gandhi and the Transvaal Indian community upon the repeal of the Anti Asiatic legislation of the province regarding Registration and Immigration," anticipating "forthcoming legislation of the provisional settlement arrived at."

## TWENTYSEVENTH SESSION—Bankipore—1912.

*President*:—R. N. Mudholkar.

General Secretaries : D. E. Wacha and D. A. Khare.

### *Extract from Presidential Address:—*

Let us constantly bear in mind that there can be no real or solid political advance without social advance and moral and spiritual regeneration. So long as the masses remain steeped in ignorance and the depressed classes are regarded as untouchable, so long as the mothers of families and the mistresses of households are kept without knowledge in the seclusion of the Purdah, not capable of participating in intellectual pursuits or public matters, so long as class is divided against class, caste against caste, race against race, and clannishness and sectional selfishness sway the actions of the members of the different communities, so long as true brotherly feeling and devotion to duty do not become the main guiding principles of our life, so long shall our aspirations remain mere dreams.

*President*:—

Born 16th May 1857. Fellow of the Elphinstone College, 1877. Passed his law examination, 1880. Set up practice in

Berar, first at Akola and later at Amraoti. Established the Berar Trading Co Ltd. Started the Vaidarbha newspaper. Participated in the establishment of the Dufferin Fund in Berar, 1885. Established Berar Sarvajanic Sabha, 1888 and was its secretary till 1898. Joined the Indian National Congress in 1888. One of the Congress delegates to England in 1890. Invited the Congress to Amraoti in 1887 and as secretary was responsible for the success of the session. Organised a branch of the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund, 1897. Rao Bahadur, 1893. Appointed as Secretary of sub committee to draft Congress Constitution, 1898. President C. P. and Berar Provincial Conference at Raipur in 1907. Presided over several Provincial Industrial Conferences in 1905 and 1906. Sided with the moderates after Surat split. President Indian National Congress, Bankipore 1912. Died 13th January 1921.

### *Details of the Session:—*

The Congress expressed disappointment at the non removal of the defects in the Reforms and prayed for an elected majority in the Imperial and Provincial Councils and the right of supplementary questions. It reiterated the demand for an Executive Council in the Punjab and condemned the extension of separate electorates to local bodies. Curiously enough, the Congress resolution declared that "a person ignorant of English should be ineligible for membership". Expressed satisfaction at the recognition by the Government of the necessity of introducing Provincial Autonomy. Commented on the injustice of keeping the higher ranks of the Army closed against Indians. Bomb thrown at Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy when he was making a formal State entry into

Delhi and he received serious injuries. The Congress sent a telegram to the Viceroy expressing its sorrow and indignation at outrage. Rash Behari Bose, later of Tokio, was alleged to be connected with this terroristic act.

## TWENTYEIGHTH SESSION—Karachi—1912.

*President:*—Nawab Syed Mahommed Bahadur.

General Secretaries : D. A. Khare and D. E. Wacha.  
Delegates: 349.

### *Extract from Presidential Address:—*

The Congress has from its very inception set before itself the ideal of a united Indian Nationality and has been consistently advocating the cause of the Indian people as a whole without being influenced by party or sectarian considerations, incompatible with that high ideal. The changes that the country has undergone during the last one generation, that is, since this organisation came into existence are immense and the Congress, I think, may well take credit for bringing about not a few of them.....Let us strive for unity amongst us, for the advancement of the nation and for bringing the forces of progress and of solidarity into line with our achievements in the past and of our expectations for the future. If these sentiments animate us, we must not lose a moment to take it at the flood tide of national unity which has in-flowed in this, our motherland. That tide by God's grace, will surely sweep away in its majestic onward course the unnatural and artificial barriers of race, colour and religion.

*President:—*

Born 1869. Grandson of Pir Asadullah Khan, a Jaghirdar. Was the first Muslim Sheriff 1896. Khan Bahadur. Nawab 1897. Member of the Madras Legislative Council 1900–1902. Participated in the discussion of Official Secrets Bill, University Bill, Incitement to Murder Bill and similar measures. Was later a member of the Imperial Legislative Council. For a period of 17 years, he represented public interests in local and Supreme Legislative Councils. Attended the Madras Congress of 1894 and soon became an ardent Congressman. Elected Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Indian National Congress, Madras 1903. Was a member of the sub committee appointed to draft Congress constitution, 1904. Member of Standing Committee of the Congress 1906. President Indian National Congress, Karachi 1913. Was the General Secretary of the Congress in 1915, and again in 1916. Retired from public life due to domestic troubles. Died 12th February 1916.

*Details of the Session:—*

The Karachi Congress saw the beginnings of Hindu Muslim entente. The Congress "placed on record its appreciation of the adoption by the All India Muslim League of the idea of Self Government." Pleaded for harmonious cooperation between the two communities. Bhupendranath Basu orated, "The India of the future will be a stronger, nobler, greater, higher, aye, and a brighter India than was realised by Asoka in the plenitude of his power, a better India than was revealed to Akbar in the wildest of his visions." Mr. Wacha said that the Congress

had entered on a New Nativity and with the New Star they would achieve New Success Reiterated the 1912 resolution on reforms. Preteited against the provisions of the Immigration Act and passed a vote of admiration for the "heroic endeavours of Mr. Gandhi and his followers and their unparalleled sacrifice in their struggle for the maintenance of the self respect of India and the redress of Indian grievances." This was the real introduction of Gandhiji to India.

## TWENTYNINTH SESSION-Madras-1914.

*President:—Bhupendranath Basu.*

General Secretaries : N. Subba Rao and Nawab Syed Mohammed Bahadur. Delegates : 866.

### *Extract from Presidential Address:—*

You may chain Prometheus but the fire is lighted and cannot be extinguished. India wants a higher life, a wider sphere of activity and usefulness. India wants that her Government should be consistent with her growing self respect and ip tellectuality.....If English rule in India meant the canonisation of a bureaucracy, if it meant perpetual domination and perpetual tutelage, an increasing dead weight on the soul of India, it would be a curse to civilisation and a blot on humanity .....I do not like the attitude of being willing to wound but afraid to strike. Let us be frank. Bold issues must be boldly faced. National regeneration requires manliness and is not advanced by the methods of the camarilla.....Now is our time; we



must throw away our lethargy; let us bind our waist-cloth on and head forward to our goal and that goal is not unworthy of our highest aspirations.

*President:—*

Born 1869. Graduated in 1880. Started practice as a solicitor in 1884. Very successful in profession. Associated with the Congress from its very inception. Captain of the Volunteer Corps at the Calcutta Congress, 1886. His oratory was of a highly cultured type. "One big leader humorously described him as the man with the melodramatic countenance and chemical tears in his eyes. The tears were physiological as well as psychological" (Dr. Pattabhi.) Was the Chairman of the Reception Committee of the 26th session of the Congress held at Calcutta. Took a leading part in the Anti Partition agitation. But was a moderate by temperament and therefore opposed the New Party. Was a member of the Bengal and Central Legislative Councils. President, Indian National Congress, Madras 1914. Vice Chancellor of the Calcutta University for many years. Was a member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India. Accepted the Montague Chelmsford Reforms. Joined the Indian Liberal Federation. Opposed Gandhiji's non-cooperation movement. Died 16th March 1924.

*Details of the Session:—*

War had been declared in Europe and the Congress made profuse declarations of loyalty and promised all help in the prosecution of the War. But the demand for self

Government was revised. "In view of the profound and avowed loyalty the people of India have manifested in the present crisis, this Congress appeals to the Government to deepen and to perpetuate it and make it an enduring and valuable asset of the Empire by removing all invidious distinctions here and abroad etc" ran the resolution. But Mrs. Besant did not place the problem on the basis of a reward but on the basis of a right. She boldly demanded the application of the principle of reciprocity urging that India should exclude imports from countries from which her people were excluded. Demanded that the higher ranks of the army should be thrown open to Indians and that military schools and colleges should be established and that Indians should be allowed to volunteer.

*Read*

# GEMS

*FROM*

Congress Presidential Addresses

*( Inception to Diamond Jubilee )*

**( 1885-1945 )**

*Collected by:—*

**U. U. BHAT**



## **Part II**

### **1915—1945**

#### **THIRTIETH SESSION-Bombay-1915.**

*President:* - **Sir Satyendra Prasanna Sinha.**

Chairman of the Reception Committee; Dinshaw Eduljee Wacha. General Secretaries; Nawab Syed Mahommed Bahadur and N. Subba Rao. Delegates : 2259.

#### *Extract from Presidential Address:-*

The only satisfactory form of self government to which India aspires cannot be anything short of what President Lincoln so pithily described as "government of the people, for the people and by the people" .....Even if the English nation were willing to make us an immediate free gift of full self-government—and those who differ most from the Congress are the first to deny the existence of such willingness—I take leave to doubt whether the boon would be worth having as such, for it is a commonplace of politics that nations like individuals must grow into freedom and nothing is so baneful in political institutions as their prematurity; nor must we forget that India free can never be ancient India restored. Such a vision, as has been justly remarked, could only be realised if India free from the English could have stood in a tranquil solitude or in a sphere of absolute isolation but unfortunately the hard facts of the modern world have to be faced and India, free from England but without any real powers

of resistance, would be immediately in the thick of another struggle of nations.

*President:—*

Born in June 1864. Ran away to England in 1881 and with the help of a scholarship prosecuted his studies. Was called to the bar in 1886. Returned to India and set up practice at Calcutta. Spoke at the Calcutta Congress, 1896 about the deposition without trial of a native chief. Advocate General of Bengal 1908. First Indian to be made Law Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, 1909. Was responsible for giving final shape to the Press Act. Did not care to stick to his high office even for half the term. President, Indian National Congress, Bombay 1915. Coopted Gandhiji in the Subjects Committee. Representative at the Imperial Conference, 1917. Represented India at the War Conference 1917 and again, 1918. Was made Under Secretary of State. Raised to the peerage as Lord Sinha of Raipur. Piloted the Government of India Bill through the House of Lords. Member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Only Indian to be appointed Governor. Governor of Bihar and Orissa, 1921. Resigned after one year. A thorough believer in Indo-British connection. Died 5th March 1928.

*Details of the Session :—*

Demanded an Executive Council for the United Provinces. Asked for the establishment of High Courts in Punjab, Burma and Central Provinces with the status and powers of chartered High Courts. Opined that

complete fiscal freedom was necessary with special reference to import, export and excise duties. Asked the A. I. C. C. to frame a scheme of reform and a programme of work, educative and propagandist and authorised the committee to confer with the All India Muslim League Council for the same purpose and to take such further measures as may be necessary. The other resolutions were merely an epitome of the resolutions which had been passed by successive sessions of the Congress since 1885. The great achievement of the Bombay Session was that the constitution of the Congress was suitably altered so as to admit the Nationalist delegates. Tilak responded by announcing the willingness of his party to re-enter the Congress. An interesting feature of the Congress was Gandhiji could not be elected to the Subjects Committee and was nominated to the same by the President,

### THIRTY FIRST SESSION—Lucknow—1916

*President:—*The Hon. Ambica Charan Mazumdar.

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Hon. Pandit Jagat Narayan. General Secretaries: Nawab Syed Mahomed Bahadur and N. Subba Rao. Delegates 2301.

*Extract from Presidential Address :—*

It is galling that people of yesterday who have scarcely a tradition of their own should be permitted to treat as slaves people whose civilisation goes back to the morning of the world.....If I were asked what was the first demand of the motherland upon her children at this juncture, I would unhesitatingly answer that it is patriotism.











And the second?—Patriotism. And the third? Patriotism. I do not mean that morbid sentiment which rises like a rocket and falls like a stone; not that sentiment which panders to passion and does not appeal to reason; but I mean that supreme virtue which enlightens the head and ennobles the heart and under the heavenly inspiration of which a man forgets his self and merges his individuality like a drop in an ocean, feeding only on self-sacrifice and ever growing on what it feeds. To the Indian Nationalists their country must be their religion “taught by no priests but by beating hearts” and her welfare their common faith ‘which makes the many one’.

*President:—*

Born 6th January 1851. Graduated in 1873 from the Presidency College, Calcutta and later became an M. A. Qualified as a lawyer and set up practice in 1879. Was Municipal President for over 20 years. Was associated with the Congress almost from its very inception. Spoke at several sessions of the Congress. His flights of eloquence were of a rare order. Speaking on the Sedition Bill at the Amraoti Congress of 1897 he perorated “For what and for whom should we be seditious? Is there any shadow of the Moghul still hovering about the country that is beckoning us to raise the Crescent on the mouldering walls of Delhi? Is there a Peshwa in the Deccan who is still harping on the dreams of a Mahratta empire? Then for whom should we be seditious?” Participated in the Anti-partition agitation. Represented Bengal at the War Conference. Member of the Legislature for two terms. President, Indian National Congress, Lucknow 1916. Wrote Indian National Evolution. Died 29th December 1922.

### *Details of the Session:—*

Enlivening spectacle of Tilak and Khaparde fraternising with Rash Behari Ghose and Surendranath Banerjea. Resolutions dealing with India's loyalty, Arms Act, volunteering and commissions in the Army, the Press Act, Indentured labour, Indians in the colonies, Imperial Preference, Swadeshi movement and Trial by Jury. Two resolutions about Bihar, one dealing with relations between Indian ryots and European planters and the necessity of a Committee to enquire into agrarian troubles and the other about the Patna University Bill. Self Government resolution recommending the Congress-League scheme. Viewed with alarm the extensive use of the Defence of India Act and Regulation III of 1818. Declared that same procedure as obtaining in United Kingdom should be followed in India. Session of Muslim League held in same city Lucknow Congress united moderates and extremists, the Congress and the League. The Lieutenant Governor and Lady Meston attended the Congress and replied to the welcome.

### THIRTY SECOND SESSION—Calcutta-1917.

*President :—Mrs. Annie Besant.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: P. B. Baikuntha Nath Sen. General Secretaries: C. P. Ramaswami Iyer P. Kesava Pillay and Bhurgri. Delegates 4967.

### *Extract from Presidential Address:—*

To see India free, to see her hold up her head among the Nations, to see her sons and daughters respected every-

where, to see her worthy of her mighty Past, engaged in building a yet mightier future—is not this worth working for, worth living for and worth dying for? Is there any other land which evokes such love for her spirituality, such admiration for her literature, such homage for her valour, as this glorious Mother of Nations?.....After a history of millennia, stretching far back out of the ken of mortal eyes; having lived with, but not died with, the mighty civilisations of the Past; having seen them rise and flourish and decay, until only their sepulchres remained deeply buried in earth's crust; having wrought and triumphed and suffered and having survived all changes unbroken; India who has been verily the Crucified among the Nations, now stands on this her Resurrection morning the Immortal, the Glorious the Ever-Young, and India shall soon be seen proud and self-reliant, strong and free the radiant splendour of Asia, as the Light and Benediction of the World.

*President:—*

Born 1st October 1847. Married December 1867. Marriage a failure. A son and daughter. Legally separated from husband 1873. Came under the influence of Charles Bradlaugh and was appointed Vice President of National Secular Society and Sub Editor, National Reformer 1877. Knowlton Pamphlet prosecution. Formed the Malthusian League. Became a powerful speaker. Came in contact with Madame Blavatsky 1882. Leaned towards socialism and conducted "Our Corner" 1813. Edited "Link" 1888. Joined the Theosophical Society 1889. Attended Labour Congress, Paris 1889. Visited Chicago Parliament of Religions 1893. Came to India November 1893. Started

school at Benares 1892, nucleus of the Hindu University Central Hindu College 1904. President of the Theosophical Society June 1907, Inaugurated Home Rule agitation 1913. Started "Commonwealth" a weekly and New India a daily. Security of Rs. 2000 from New India 1916. Prohibited entry into Bombay and C. P. Interned at Ootacamund June 1917. President Indian National Congress, Calcutta 1917. Supported the Montague Chelmsford Reforms and opposed Gandhiji's non-cooperation. Supported Independence resolution, Madras Congress 1927. Died September 1933.

*Details of the session:—*

Welcome extended to E. S. Montague. Asked for the release of Ali brothers. Usual resolutions of India's loyalty, the necessity for military training and for larger proportion of commissioned posts to Indians in the army. Urged improvement in pay, prospects and equipment of Indian soldiers. Reiterated its protest against the Press Act and the Arms Act and the disabilities of Indians in the colonies. Condemned the appointment of the Rowlatt Committee. Urged the establishment of responsible Government and the immediate introduction of the Congress League Scheme as a first step in the progress. Andhra was recognised as a separate province. Appealed to Government to save the life of Arjunlal Sethi, hunger striker. Indentured labour working of the special coercive powers, extensive use of the Defence of India Act and the formation of Boy Scout Associations under Indian control were other subjects dealt with. National Flag Committee. The tri-colour Home Rule Flag was hoisted,

## THIRTY THIRD SESSION—Bombay—1918

*President:—*Hasan Imam

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Vithalbhai J. Patel. General Secretaries: C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, P. Kesava Pillay and Bhurgri. Delegates 3500

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

To deny that India feels the yoke of the stranger is to shut one's eyes to fundamental facts. The apologists of British Rule in India have asserted that the presence of the British in this land has been due to humane motives; that British object has been to save the people from themselves, to raise their moral standard, to bring them material prosperity, to confer on them the civilising influences of Europe and so forth and so on. These are hypocrisies common to most apologists. The fact is that the East India Company was not conceived for the benefit of India but to take away her wealth for the benefit of Britain. The greed of wealth that characterised its doings was accompanied by greed for territorial possessions and when the transference of rule from the Company to the Crown took place, the greed of wealth and lust of power abated not one jot in the inheritors, the only difference being that tyranny became systematised and plunder became scientific.

*President:—*

Born 31st August 1871. Sailed for England, 1889. Secretary of the Indian Society. Canvassed for Dadabhai Naoroji 1891. Called to the bar and returned to India 1892. Transferred his practice to Calcutta 1910 Judge of the Calcutta High Court, April 1911. Resigned and

reverted to Patna Bar 1913 Gave equal donations to Benares and Aligarh Universities. President, Behari Student's Conference, Gaya 1909. President, Behar Provincial Conference 1917. Trustee of the Aligarh College 1911. President, Indian National Congress, Special Session, Bombay 1918. Supported Gandhiji's Satyagraha movement against the Rowlatt Bills. Led the Home Rule League Deputation in England. Joined the Indian Muslim delegation in London to present the case of the Turks. Sympathised strongly with the Khilafat movement but was cautious. Evidence before Lee Commission 1924 memorable. Staunch nationalist throughout his life. Brother of Sir Ali Imam. Died 1933.

### *Details of the Session:—*

Reaffirmed the Congress League scheme. Dealt with the Montague Reform proposals at length. Asked for simultaneous advance of the provinces. Demanded a Declaration of Rights of the people of India. Opined that Indian legislatures should have the same measure of Fiscal Autonomy as the Selfgoverning Dominions of the Empire. Declared that the Montague proposals were disappointing and unsatisfactory and went on to suggest modifications which were considered absolutely necessary to constitute a substantial step towards Responsible Government. Decided to send a deputation to England. It is noteworthy that a session of the Muslim League had been held at the same time under the Presidentship of the Rajah of Mahmudabad and adopted resolution on practically the same lines as the Congress.



## THIRTY FOURTH SESSION -Delhi-1918.

*President:—* **Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.**

Chairman of the Reception Committee; Hakim Ajmal Khan. General Secretaries: V. J. Patel, Fazlul Huq and Pandit Gokaran Nath Misra. Delegates 4861

*Extract from Presidential Address :—*

You have asked that the British Government should extend the principle of self determination to India in her political reconstruction. I ask you, my brothers and sisters, to apply that principle to your affairs so far as it lies in your power. I ask you to determine that henceforward, you shall be equal fellow subjects of your British fellow-subjects and equals of all the rest of your fellow-men in the world. I ask you to determine that hereafter you will resent and resent most strongly any effort to treat you as an inferior people. I ask you to determine that henceforward you will claim, and claim with all the strength that you command, that in your own country you shall have opportunities to grow as freely as Englishmen grow in the United Kingdom. If you will exercise this much of self determination and go about inculcating these principles of equality, of liberty and fraternity among your people. if you will make every brother, however humble or lowly-placed he may be, to feel that the ray Divine is as much in him as in any other man, however highly-placed he may be; if you will make every brother realise that he is entitled to be treated as an equal fellow subject you will have determined your future for yourself.

*President:—*

Born 25th December 1861. Took to journalism and edited the Indian Union 1885-1909. Took LL. B. and enrolled 1892. Member of the Provincial Legislative Council 1902-1912. President, U. P. Political Conference 1908. President, Indian National Congress, Lahore 1909 and Delhi 1918. Member, Imperial Legislative Council 1910-1919. Resigned as a protest against Rowlatt Act. Member Industrial Commission 1916-1918 and wrote minority report. Founder, Benares Hindu University and its Vice-Chancellor 1919-1939. Its Rector since 1939. Member, Central Legislative Assembly 1924-1930. Resigned as a protest against Imperial Preference Policy. Jailed twice during the Civil Disobedience Movement, 1930-1933. Delegate to the Second Round Table Conference 1931. President of the two banned sessions of the Congress in 1932 and 1933. Thrice President of the Hindu Maha Sabha, 1923, 1924 and 1936. Resigned from the Congress Parliamentary Board in 1934 due to differences on the question of the Communal Award and formed the Nationalist Party. Retired from active politics due to old age.

*Details of the Session:—*

The usual resolutions on India's loyalty and appreciation of the gallantry of armed forces. Demanded the repeal of all repressive laws. Wanted to be represented at the Peace Conference by elected representatives and nominated Lokamanya Tilak, Gandhiji and Hasan Imam. Reaffirmed the Bombay resolution on reforms. Opined the Rowlatt Committee would affect the successful working of constitutional reforms. Welcomed the report of the Industrial Commission. Requested the release of Ali

brothers. Asked that India should be relieved from the burden of contributing 45 millions for war purposes. Recommended the desirability of securing to Ayurveda and Unani the advantages vouchsafed to the Western system. Full responsible Government in provinces was to be granted at once and no part of British India should be excluded from the benefit of constitutional reforms. Release of all detenues and political prisoners asked for. Offered welcome to the Prince of Wales. A deputation to England to present the Congress case.

### *Events of the year :—*

The Rowlatt Bills make their appearance. Introduced in Imperial Council, 6th February. Gandhiji intimates his intention of starting satyagraha. Nation wide hartal and demonstrations, 6th April. Heroism of Swami Shraddhanand. Unprecedented fraternisation between Hindus and Muslims. Dr. Kitchlew and Satyapal arrested. Violent demonstrations in Gujranwala and Kasur. Gandhiji starts for Delhi, 8th April. Arrested and turned back enroute, 10th April. News of arrest creates disturbances in Gujarat. Satyagraha suspended. Jallianwalla Bagh massacre 13th April. 1600 rounds of ammunition fired. Amritsar atrocities, Martial Law in Punjab. A. I. C. C. demands enquiry. V. J. Patel and Kelkar on deputation to England. B. G. Horniman deported from India. Sir S. P. Sinha raised to peerage and appointed Under Secretary of State. Sir Sankaran Nair resigns Executive Councillorship, 14th July. Congress and other deputations in England. Controversy between Congress deputation and Mrs. Besant. Punjab Enquiry

Committee appointed by Congress. Government appoints Hunter Commission. Congress decides to erect national memorial for Jallianwala. Ali Brothers and Maulana Azad released.

### THIRTY FIFTH SESSION-Amritsar-1919.

*President :* **Pandit Motilal Nehru**

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Swami Shradhanand. General Secretaries: V. J. Patel, M. A. Ansari and Pandit Gokaran Nath Misra. Delegates 7031.

#### *Extract from Presidential Address :—*

You have assembled here in deep mourning over the cruel murder of hundreds of your brothers and in electing your president you have assigned to him the position of chief mourner. That position I accept in all reverence.... We must aim at an India where all are free and have the fullest opportunities of development; where women have ceased to be in bondage and the rigours of the caste system have disappeared; where there are no privileged classes or communities; where education is free and open to all; where the capitalist and the landlord do not oppress the labourer or the ryot; where labour is respected and well-paid; and poverty, the nightmare of the present generation, is a thing of the past. Life will then be worth living in this country, it will be inspired by joy and hope and the terrible misery we see around us will become a bad dream which has faded away from our memory on our awakening to welcome the morning sun.

*President:—*

Born 6th May 1861. Took to law and established himself as a successful lawyer. Attended a few early sessions of the Congress but too busy with profession. Proposed Dr. Rash Behari Ghose for Presidentship, Surat Congress 1907. A moderate. President, U. P. Provincial Conference 1918. Came under the influence of Gandhiji. President, Indian National Congress, Amritsar 1919. Gave up his extensive practice. Leading non-cooperator. Organised boycott of Prince of Wales. Arrested and sentenced to 6 months, 1921. Joined C. R. Das and founded Swaraj Party, 1922. Elected to the Central Assembly, 1923. Leader of the Opposition, Gandhi Das Nehru Pact 1924. Revolt of the Responsivists. Leader of Swaraj Party after death of Das 1925. Re-elected to Central Assembly in General Election 1926. Trip to Europe 1927. President of Committee to draft constitution for India, 1928. Organised the boycott of the Simon Commission. President, Indian National Congress, Calcutta 1928. Nehru Report named after him shelved at Calcutta. Acting President of the Congress, April 1930. Leader Salt Satyagraha. Arrested and sentenced to 6 months in June. Sapru-Jayakar pour-parlers. Sent by special train to Poona to meet Gandhiji, Released in September. Died 6th February 1931.

*Details of the Session:—*

Main resolution moved by Deshabandhu Das was for rejecting the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms as inadequate unsatisfactory and disappointing. Gandhiji moved amendment for cooperation. A compromise formula evolved

thanking Montague and to so work the reforms as to secure an early establishment of full responsible Government. Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford was impeached and his recall demanded. Call for investigation of Land Revenue System, Labour conditions and the woes of third class passengers. Condemnation of mob violence in Punjab and Gujarat thrown out by the Subjects Committee but passed by the open session on the insistence of Gandhiji. Welcome offered to the Prince of Wales. Resolutions on Swadeshi, prohibition of export of milch cows and stud bulls and the liquor policy of the provinces. Protested against hostile attitude of British Ministers towards Khilafat issue. Lokamanya, Lalaji and Andrews thanked for services. Endorsed the boycott of the Hunter Commission. Congratulated Sankaran Nair on resignation. Resolution on Fundamental Rights. Pleaded for repeal of Press Act and Rowlatt Act. Horniman's deportation condemned.

### *Events of the year :—*

The events of 1920 centre around the Khilafat movement. Deputation to the Viceroy headed by Dr. Ansari, 19th January. Viceroy's reply disappointing. Third Khilafat Conference, Bombay, February. Muslim deputation to England headed by Maulana Mahomed Ali in March. Khilafat day, 19th March. Gandhiji accepts the presidency of the All India Home Rule League. Lokamanya issues manifesto of Congress Democratic Party. Proposed peace terms with Turkey published 14th May. Hunter Committee report published simultaneously. Khilafat Committee at Bombay adopts Gandhiji's noncooperation project, 20th May. All India Congress Committee at Benares, 30th May. Decides on a special session of

Congress. Conference of leaders at Allahabad, 2nd June. Non co operation approved. Meanwhile Muslims embark on a Hijrat. Death of Lokamanya, 30st July. Non co-operation formally inaugurated, 1st August. Provincial Congress Committees give overwhelming support for non-co-operation. Collision between the Hijrat emigrants and the military. Viceroy's diatribe against the Congress and non co-operation.

### THIRTY SIXTH SESSION-Calcutta-1920.

*President* :—**Lala Lajpat Rai**

Chairman of the Reception Committee: B. Chakravarti. General Secretaries: V. J. Patel, M. A. Ansari and Pandit Gokaran Nath Misra.

#### *Extract from Presidential Address:—*

Mine is a religion of hope and faith. I believe in struggling a righteous, stern and unyielding struggle. I am quite prepared for defeats and repulses. The colossal difficulties in the way of success, the discouraging circumstances relied on by advocates of inactivity do not overwhelm me. In fact I am inclined to take them, as a greater reason for a more determined struggle; according to my political creed, every repulse ought to furnish a fresh starting point for a renewed, more righteous and more vigorous activity. The political principles, which I believe in very strongly, are that nations are by themselves made, and it is righteousness that exalteth a nation.

Under these circumstances, my countrymen, my humble advice to you is to be neither nervous nor hyster-

ical, to maintain a dignified, firm, manly, but righteous attitude, amidst difficulties and storms, and to continue the struggle in the light of experience gained, with a heart for any fate still achieving, still pursuing, learn to labour and to wait.

*President:*

Born 1865. Joined the legal profession and by 1892 established himself in considerable practice at Lahore. Early in life came under the influence of Dayanand Saraswati and for years engaged in Arya Samaj activities. Visited England in 1895 as a delegate of the Congress. Arrested in 1907 and deported to Mandalay but was released after 6 months. Thereafter became foremost leader of the Punjab. Went to America during war but had to stay there till 1919 as his passport was withheld. Published 'Young India', banned in India and England. President, Special session of the Congress at Calcutta in August 1920. President, Indian Trade Union Congress. In 1921 and 1922 underwent two terms of imprisonment. Elected to the Central Legislative Assembly in 1923 as a Swarajist but later formed the Nationalist Party and successfully contested the 1926 election. Author of many books. Moved the resolution on the boycott of the Simon Commission in the Assembly. Led the boycott demonstration at Lahore on the 30<sup>th</sup> October 1926. Procession dispersed and Lalaji received injuries. He said "Every blow aimed at me is a nail struck in the coffin of British Imperialism in India." The injuries hastened his death which occurred on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 1928.



*Details of the Session:—*

Mourned the death of Lokamanya Tilak and Dr. Mahendranath. Expressed concurrence with the findings of the Punjab Enquiry Sub Committee. Declared that the Majority report of the Hunter Committee was tainted by bias and race prejudice and that the report was unacceptable and unreliable. Condemned British cabinet's apathy towards Punjab atrocities and declared the cabinet have forfeited the confidence of the people of India. Main resolution was the non-co-operation resolution advocating surrender of titles, refusal to attend Government functions, boycott of Schools, law courts and Legislatures, boycott of foreign goods etc. B. C. Pal moved amendment to send deputation to British Premier. C. R. Das supported amendment. Full dress debate. Except Muslim leaders and Pandit Motilal, most well known Congress leaders opposed resolution. But resolution was carried by 1886 votes to 884. Calcutta session for the first time put Gandhiji as the accredited leader of the nation.

**THIRTY SEVENTH SESSION-Nagpur-1920.**

*President C. Vijayaraghavachariar:—*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Seth Jamnalal Bajaj. General Secretaries: Motilal Nehru, C. Rajagopala Chariar and M. A. Ansari. Delegates 14,583.

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

India reborn and united and speaking as one man with her banner with the new motto not of liberty and equality only but also of fraternity inscribed on it fluttering in every wind of heaven, can tell England. "We also belong to the

species homo. We were the first and the foremost of it and we mean to be one of the foremost if not the foremost of it again. Don't be stupid any more, either now or it would be too late; remember that there are some every where in India with admiration and love to England, the greater Athens of the modern world, not inferior to the romantic devotion of Lord Byron to ancient Athens and that the fact of rapid success of the movement of non-cooperation and the universal desire for a sanction other than rebellion to secure our rights shows conclusively the firm loyalty of the people and that it would be unparalleled folly and atrocious and suicidal folly to attempt to keep us by coercion under plausible and captivating camouflage such as goal of responsible government, representation and a voice in the League of Nations and Empire Conference. In one word, be a good boy and be partner with us or get thee gone". And this too without a Cromwell and without shedding a drop of blood.

*President:—*

Born 1852. Associated with the Congress from its very inception. Member of the Committee to draw up the Congress constitution 1887. Member of the Madras Legislative Council 1885-1901. Member of the Indian Congress Committee 1899-1900. President, Madras Provincial Conference, Calicut 1900. Collection work for "India" 1911-1902. Seconded Self-Government resolution, Benares Congress 1905. Moved resolution on Permanent settlement, Calcutta Congress, Stood aloof from Congress since Surat split as the moderate position did not appeal to him. Member, Imperial Legislative Council 1913-1916. Reappeared in the Congress after Lucknow Session 1916

and took active part in the special session held at Bombay 1918 and in the session at Amritsar 1919. President, Special Provincial Conference Madras 1918. President Indian National Congress, Nagpur 1920, Did not agree with non-cooperation. Later, sympathiser of the Hindu Maha Sabha and presided over one session. A staunch nationalist to the end of his life. Called G.O.M. of Madras. Died 1943.

### *Details of the Session :—*

Reaffirmed the non-cooperation resolution passed at Calcutta, covering the whole field from renunciation of titles to non-payment of taxes. Called upon merchants to boycott foreign trade relations. Urged the Congress to organise Indian National Service. An All India Tilak Swarajya Fund to be started. Recognised the growing friendliness between the police and military and the people. Appealed to Government servants to help the national cause. Laid emphasis on non-violence as an integral part of non-cooperation. Homage to Martyr Mac Swiney the Irish hunger striker. Protested against Reverse Councils Loot. Resolved to boycott the Duke of Connaught. Condemned export of food stuffs. Requested Princes to establish Responsible Government in States. Esher Committee and its recommendations condemned. Congress creed changed to the attainment of Swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means. Provinces regrouped on linguistic basis. Strength of A. I. C. C. increased to 350. Working Committee of 15 members appointed. Extended support to Indians overseas in their struggle.

*Events of the year :—*

1921 was the year of non co-operation. Satisfactory response to the triple boycott. National colleges and Universities spring up throughout the country Seth Jamnalal Bajaj gives Rs. One Lakh to Tilak Swaraj Fund, January. Working Committee authorises Deshabandhu Das to look after labour organisation. Nankana tragedy resulting in 195 deaths, March. A. I. C. C. at Bezwada decides on collecting Rs. One crore for Tilak Swaraj fund, enlisting one crore of members and introducing twenty lakhs of charkas. Restraint orders on Das, Yakub Hasan, Lalaji, Rajen Babu and others. Gandhiji's interview with the Viceroy. By July, Swaraj fund over-subscribed by 15 lakhs. A. I. C. C. at Bombay in July decides on boycott of Prince of Wales. Moplah Rebellion in Malabar. Khilafat Conference at Karachi, July. President Mahomed Ali's fatwa against Muslims serving in army. Ali Brothers arrested. Karachi Trial. Chirala Satyagraha. Martial Law in Malabar. Prince of Wales arrives in Bombay, 17th November. Rioting in Bombay. Wholesale arrests. Over 40,000 in jail. Volunteer organisations declared illegal. President-elect of Congress, Das, arrested fortnight before session.

**THIRTYEIGHTH SESSION—Ahmedabad—1921.**

*President:* **Hakim Ajmal Khan (President-elect C, R. Das was in Jail).**

**Chairman of the Reception Committee:** Vallabhbhai Patel. **General Secretaries:** Motilal Nehru, C. Rajagopalachariar, V. J. Patel and A. Rangaswami Iyengar. **Delegates** 4726.

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

It should be a matter of pride to all of us that India is showing the way to other sister countries. Non-violent non-cooperation has ceased to be an Indian movement. It is fast becoming an Asiatic movement and the day is not distant when the conscience of the world will adopt non-violent non-cooperation as the world weapon against universal injustice and untruth. Who can deny the success of the spirit of the non-cooperation movement in India after witnessing the cheerful spirit with which our workers have made and are making willing sacrifices for the cause of their country and are going to jail in ever increasing numbers with a smile on their lips. What is still more is that not even this intense repression has provoked violence. It has only redoubled the national determination..... Our country is experiencing terrible convulsions but it requires no prophet to foretell that these are the birth pangs of young India that will revive the glorious traditions of our ancient country and take its proud place by the nations of the world.

*Extract from C. R. Das' undelivered Address:*

It is argued that the whole doctrine (non-cooperation) is doctrine of negation, a doctrine of despair. I agree that in form the doctrine is one of negation but I maintain that in substance it is one of affirmation. We break in order to build; we destroy in order to construct; we reject in order to accept. That is the whole history of human endeavour. If subjection be an evil, then we are bound to non-cooperate with every agency that seeks to perpetuate the subjection. That is a negation; but it affirms our deter

mination to be free, to win our liberty at any cost. Nor do I agree that the doctrine is one of despair. It is a doctrine of hope and of confidence and of unbounded faith in its efficacy... .. I must not forget to mention the students who are at once the hope and glory of the Motherland. I, who have been privileged to watch the current of political life at its very centre, can testify to the wonderful courage and unflinching devotion displayed by the students. Theirs is the inspiration behind the movement, theirs the victory. They are the pilgrims on the road. If suffering has been their lot, victory is their due.

*President :-*

Born 1865. Belonged to a family of reputed Hakims. Educated in all the Islamic branches of learning. Took to medicine and became the leading Unani physician in Delhi. Went on an extensive pilgrimage in the Middle East 1904. Visited Europe in 1911. Visited the leading Hospitals of England and the Continent. Wrote several treatises on medicine. Member of the Muslim League and later Vice-President. Chairman of the Reception Committee, Indian National Congress, Delhi 1918. Came under the influence of Gandhiji. A prominent non-cooperator and Khilafatist. C. R. Das, President-elect of Ahmedabad Congress arrested and Hakimji unanimously elected in his place. Presided over the Congress at Ahmedabad, 1921 with great ability. President, Civil Disobedience Committee, 1922. Participated in the Unity Conference 1924. Foremost exponent of Hindu-Muslim Unity. Member of the Working Committee of the Congress till death. Trip to Europe for reasons of health, 1925. Died 29th December 1927.

### *Details of the session :—*

Session noteworthy in more than one way. President-elect Das was in Jail and Hakim Ajmal Khan was unanimously elected to preside in his stead. Chairs and benches for delegates were eliminated. Khadi tents made their appearance for first time. Main resolution was really a thesis on non-cooperation, its philosophy and programme alike. Took 35 minutes to read. The pledge for volunteers included. Gandhiji was appointed as the sole executive authority of the Congress and invested with the full powers of the A. I. C. C. and also the power to nominate a successor. Maulana Hasrat Mohani proposed to define Swaraj in the Congress creed as Complete Independence. Gandhiji opposed it vehemently and the resolution was thrown out. Public support was requested for hand-spinning and hand weaving, communal unity, total prohibition and eradication of untouchability. Declared that the non-cooperation or Khilafat movement had nothing whatsoever to do with Moplah Rebellion. Expressed horror at the Podanur train tragedy. Congratulated Kemal Pasha on his victories over the Greeks. Felicitated Baba Gurdit Singh of the Komagatamaru.

### *Events of the year:—*

All Parties' Conference at Bombay. Passed resolution condemning the repressive policy of the Government and asking for the withdrawal of all special laws, the release of all political prisoners and the convening of a Round Table Conference. Viceroy's "No". Gandhiji intimates Viceroy, 1st February, his intention to start Civil Disobedience in Bardoli. Guntur declares no-tax. Military quartered. Andhra sanctions no-tax campaign. Government's Communique. 21 constables and a Sub-Inspector burnt alive at Chauri

Chaura by a mob, 5th February. Working Committee at Bardoli, 12th February suspends Civil Disobedience and advocates constructive programme. A. I. C. C. at Delhi on the 24th and 25th February endorses Bardoli decisions. Censure on Gandhiji moved by Dr. Moonje thrown out. Gandhiji arrested, 13th March. Sentenced to 6 years. A. I. C. C. at Lucknow in June appoints Civil Disobedience Committee. Severe repression in Andhra. Lloyd George's "Steel Frame" speech. Borsad satyagraha. Akali movement. C. D. Committee divided on council entry. A. I. C. C. at Calcutta postpones discussion of council entry to Gaya Congress.

### THIRTY NINTH SESSION-Gaya-1922

*President:* Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das.

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Brij Kishore Prasad. General Secretaries: Moazzam Ali, Vallabhbhai Patel and Rajendra Prasad. Delegates: 3248.

#### *Extract from Presidential Address:—*

I have to repeat that it has been proved beyond any doubt that the method of non-violent non-cooperation is the only method which we must follow to secure a system of government which may in reality be the foundation of Swaraj..... We have to fight against all corruptions and all immorality. It is only thus that freedom can be attained. Whatever obstacles there may be in the path of Swaraj either of the individual or the nation or humanity at large, these obstacles must be removed. . . . That being the spirituality of the movement as I understand it, I am prepared to put away all obstacles that lie between the Indian nation and the attainment of its freedom, not stealthily but openly, reverently, in the name of



**Truth and God** The fact is destruction itself will never bring us Swaraj. The fact further is that no construction is possible without destruction. We must not forget that it is not this activity or that activity which by itself can bring Swaraj. It is the totality of our national activity in the way of creation that will bring us Swaraj.

*President:—*

Born 5th November 1870. Educated in Calcutta and England. Called to the bar, 1892 and returned home and enrolled as a barrister the next year. Appeared in many sensational cases (1907-11) like the Manicktolla Bomb case, Dacca Conspiracy case and the Munitions Board case. Member of the Congress Amritsar Enquiry Committee. Advocated obstruction at the Amritsar Congress, 1919. Opposed non-co-operation at the Calcutta special session but accepted it at Nagpur in 1920. Suspended his immense practice of £50,000 a year. Organised the boycott of the Prince of Wales. Elected President of the Ahmedabad Congress, 1921 but arrested 15 days before the session. Sentenced to 6 months' imprisonment. In 1922, presided over the Congress at Gaya and founded the Swaraj Party. In 1923 the Swarajists entered the Councils but Das refused to form a ministry in Bengal. Presided over the All-India Trade Union Congress at Lahore. In 1924 captured the Calcutta Corporation and became the first Mayor. Gandhi-Das-Nehru Pact. Satyagraha at Tarakeswar. Presided again over the All-India Trade Union Congress. Reading - Birkenhead - Das conversations in 1925. Made over his entire property to a trust for the service of the country. Died at Darjeeling 16th June 1925.

*Details of the session:—*

Paid homage to the memory of Motilal Ghose and A. C. Mazumdar. Admired the unexampled bravery of the Akali martyrs and their spirit of non-violence. Congratulated Kemal Pasha. Solemn warning to Government not to incur any more national debts. Appealed to the public not to contribute to any further loans floated by the Government. The nation was called upon to get ready men and money for mass civil disobedience. Boycott of Colleges and courts was to continue. The right of private defence conceded. Labour was to be organised and a Committee appointed for the purpose. Main resolution of the session was on council entry. Rajaji led the Nochangers and Das led the Swarajists. Jamiat-ul-ulema had issued a fatwa declaring Council entry as Mamnoon and not Haram. Sriman Srinivasa Iyengar suggested a compromise by which Congressmen should contest the elections but refuse to take their seats. Loyalty to Gandhiji was the main desideratum in the voting. Declared by a large majority to continue the boycott of councils. Deshabandhu Das resigns presidency.

*Events of the year:—*

Political atmosphere polluted by communal riots. A.I.C.C. considers President's resignation. Compromise on Council propaganda thanks to Maulana Azad. Assembly throws out Salt Tax. Viceroy certifies. Nochangers resign from Working Committee. Das' resignation accepted at Bombay A. I. C. C. Dr. Ansari becomes Acting President. Flag Satyagraha in Nagpur continues. Tamil Nad Committee refuses to obey compromise. Working Committee resigns. A special session decided on. Hartal and demonstrations against all Imperial

functions as protest against treatment of Indians overseas. The Special session permits council entry. General elections to Legislatures. Swarajists sweep the polls in Bengal and C. P. Many liberals like Surendranath Banerjee defeated. In the Central Assembly, the Swarajists capture 48 seats. Swarajists' triumph in the legislatures. The Akali struggle continues. Maharaja of Nabha forced to abdicate.

### FORTIETH SESSION-Delhi-1923

*President* : Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Dr. M. A. Ansari. General Secretaries : Moazzam Ali, Vallabhbhai Patel and Rajendra Prasad.

*Extract from Presidential Address :—*

It is my belief that liberty is the natural and God-given right of man. No man and no bureaucracy consisting of men has got the right to make the servants of God its own slaves. However attractive be the euphemisms invented for 'subjugation' and 'slavery', still slavery is slavery, and it is opposed to the will and the canons of God. I therefore consider it a bounden duty to liberate my country from its yoke. Liberty being the primary right of man, it is nobody's personal privilege to prescribe limits or apportion shares in the distribution of it. To say that a nation should get its liberty in graduated stages is the same as saying that an owner should by right receive his property only in bits and a creditor his dues by instalments.

*President:—*

Born in Mecca 1888 and passed childhood in Arabia. Educated at the Al Azhar University, Cairo. After

coming to India, settled in Calcutta and started an Urdu weekly, *Al Hilal*. Suppressed by the Government. Started *Al Balagh*. Arrested and interned along with the Ali brothers. After release, joined the Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji. Leading Khilafatist and prominent non-cooperator. Imprisoned along with Deshabandhu Das 1921-1922. President, Special Session of the Indian, National Congress at Delhi, 1923. Suffered imprisonment several times in connection with the Salt Satyagraha and the Civil Disobedience Movement 1932. Acting Congress President, 1930. Member of the Working Committee for over two decades. President Indian National Congress Ramgarh 1940 and continues to be so. Leading theologian, well known author, impressive orator and powerful writer. Arrested on the 9th August 1942 and has since been detained in the Ahmednagar Fort. Transferred recently to Midnapore.

*Details of the session:—*

Permitted such congressmen "as have no religious or conscientious objection against council entry" to enter legislatures. All propaganda against council entry suspended. Redoubled efforts to be put forth on behalf of constructive programme. Committee appointed to organise an effective campaign of Civil Disobedience and to advise and regulate the provinces. Two more Committees appointed, one to revise the constitution and the other to prepare a draft of the National Pact. Nagpur Flag Satyagraha congratulated on its successful finish. Press warned to observe great restraint in dealing with communal matters. Appointment of District Conciliation Committees advised. Boycott of Foreign cloth through Khaddar urged. Condem-

ned the forced abdication of Maharajah of Nabha. Sympathy for earthquake in Japan and floods in Bihar, Kanara and Burma. Released prisoners, notably Lala Lajpat Rai and Maulana Mahomed Ali welcomed. Kenya, the subject of indignation. Urged the formation of Civic Guards and the promotion of physical culture. Committee to determine the most feasible methods of encouraging Indian industries.

### FORTYFIRST SESSION-Cocanada-1923.

*President :—Maulana Mohammad Ali.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Deshbaktha Konda Venkatappayya. General Secretaries: Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. S. D. Kitchlew, Gangadhar Rao Deshpande and D. Gopalakrishnayya. Delegates: 6188.

*Extract from Presidential Address :—*

Our Swaraj must be the Sarvaraj, the Raj of all and in order to be that, it must have been won through the willing sacrifice of all. If this is not so, we shall have to depend for its maintenance as well on the prowess of the fighting classes and this we must not do. Swaraj must be won by the minimum sacrifice of the maximum number and not by the maximum sacrifice of the minimum number. To die for a cause is not very difficult. The harder thing is to live for a cause and if need be, suffer for it and the cause that we must live and suffer for, must be the realisation in India of the Kingdom of God. . . . What would Christianity be without the Cross and Islam without the Tragedy of Kerbala? As I have said before, we have not yet made full use of our Cross. Friends, let us do it now

if we bear any love towards our absent leader and calling upon the nation to give us its full backing, free the country and break open the great Bastille which keeps Mahatma Gandhi and thousands of his disciples in chains.

*President:—*

Born 1878. Educated at Aligarh and Oxford. On return from England, was for sometime in the service of the Nawab of Rampur and also of the Baroda State. In 1907 took to journalism and established and edited the *Comrade*, an English Weekly published first at Calcutta and later at Delhi. Pamphlet "Come into Macedonia and help us" forfeited 1914. Interned on the outbreak of the war, October 1914. Released 1919 and attended Amritsar Congress. Declared "had come with a return ticket from jail". Became leader of the Khilafat movement and ardent follower of Gandhiji. Led a Khilafat deputation to England 1920. Member, Working Committee of the Congress. President, All India Khilafat Conference, Karachi 1921. Declared it unlawful for Muslims to serve in the army. Arrested at Waltair in September 1921 and sentenced at Karachi to 2 years. President, Indian National Congress, Cocanada 1923. Associated with the Unity Conference 1924. Opposed the Nehru Report on the independence issue and communal settlement. Drifted away from the Congress. Delegate to the first Round Table Conference. Died in England 4th January 1931.

*Details of the Session:—*

Recorded nation's sorrow on the death of Kasturi Ranga Iyengar and Aswini Kumar Dutta. Condemned

the continued incarceration of Savarkar. National Pact to be circulated along with the Bengal Pact prepared by Deshabandhu Das. Formation of an All India Volunteer organisation. A scheme of separate Congress departments was called for, as also a scheme of a National Service of paid workers to work these various departments. Whole hearted sympathy with Kenya Indians and George Joseph and Sarojini Naidu deputed as delegates to the Kenya Indian Congress. Committee appointed to enquire into conditions of Indian labour in Ceylon. Resolved to stand by the Sikhs as Government action in attacking Akali Dal was a challenge to right of free association. Civil Disobedience and Satyagraha Committees absorbed into the Working Committee. Emigration from India was advised to be stopped. The magnificent tent of the Session became the permanent property of the Congress.

### *Events of the year :—*

Gandhiji's sudden illness with appendicitis. Operation by Col. Maddock. Released, 5th February. Swarajist triumph in the legislatures. Dyarchy killed in Bengal and C. P. Supplies thrown out in the Central Assembly. The Akali movement stronger. Murder of Earnest Day in the streets of Calcutta. The Dinajpur Resolution on Gopinath Saha. Juhu conversations between Gandhiji, Das and Nehru. A. I. C. C. at Ahmedabad in June. 2000 yards of yarn decided as Congress franchise. Gopinath Saha resolution and the memorable scenes. Renewed repression in Bengal followed by the arrest of Subhas Bose and other eminent Congressmen. Communal riots all over the country. Gandhiji fasts for 21 days.

The Unity Conference at Delhi, attended by the Metropolitan of Calcutta, September. A Central National Panchayat created. Satyagraha at Tarakeswar. The threat of the arrest of Deshabandhu Das. The All Parties Conference at Bombay. Its infructuous deliberations. The death of Bi Amman, mother of the Ali Brothers.

#### FORTYSECOND SESSION-Belgaum-1924.

*President* :—**Mahatma Gandhi.**

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Gangadhar Rao Deshpande. General Secretaries: Shaib Quereshi, B. F. Bharucha and Jawaharlal Nehru Delegates: 1844.

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

It is my deliberate conviction that non-violent non-cooperation has given to the people a consciousness of their strength. It has brought to the surface the hidden powers in the people of resistance through suffering. It has caused an awakening among the masses which perhaps no other method could have..... The fruition of the boycott of foreign cloth through hand-spinning and Khaddar is calculated not only to bring about a political result of the first magnitude, it is calculated also to make the poorest of India, whether men or women, conscious of their strength and make them partakers in the struggle for India's freedom..... I must fight unto death the unholy attempt to impose British methods and British institutions on India. But I combat the attempt with non-violence. I believe in the capacity of India to offer non-violent battle to the English rulers. The experiment has not failed.....



*President:—*

Born 2nd October 1869, Barrister at Bombay and later South Africa. Led an Indian Ambulance Corps during Boer War and Zulu Revolt. Satyagraha in South Africa and the Gandhi-Smuts agreement. Kaira Satyagraha and the Champaran Agitation. Became undisputed leader of Congress after 1920. Inaugurated and led the Khilafat and Non-cooperation movements, 1920—1922. Arrested and sentenced to six years imprisonment, March 1922. Released 4th February 1924. 21 day's fast for communal unity. President, Indian National Congress Belgaum 1924. Devoted the next 6 years to constructive programme. Inaugurated the Salt Satyagraha, April 1930. Interned in May 1930, released January 1931. Gandhi-Irwin Truce. Delegate to Round Table Conference 1931. Imprisoned, January 1932. Fast unto death against communal Award. Award modified. Released 1933. Formed Harijan Seva Sangh. Retired from Congress 1934. Mediated between Congress and Government regarding formation of Ministries 1937. Rajkot imbroglio and fast 1939. Inaugurated Individual Civil Disobedience, 1940. Formulated Quit India move, 1942. Arrested and detained, 9th August 1942. 21 days fast in February 1943. Life partner, Kasturba died in detention, February 1944. Released, May 1944. Gelder Proposals. Gandhi-Jinnah pourparlers.

*Details of the Session:—*

Gandhi-Das-Nehru agreement passed by the A. I. C. C. in November was ratified. The Congress franchise was likewise altered. Resolutions on untouchability and Vaikom Satyagraha. Paid national service was declared

to be perfectly honourable. The Akali movement, drink and opium traffic dealt with by suitable resolutions. The exodus of Hindus from Kohat was deplored and the Muslims of Kohat were exhorted to assure their Hindu brethren of full protection of lives and property and the Hindu refugees were advised not to return except upon the invitation of the Kohat Muslims. Sympathy expressed for the sufferers in Gulbarga in Nizam's Dominions. Indians abroad, the subject of a suitable resolution. Services of Sarojini Naidu, Vaze and Benarsidas Chaturvedi appreciated. Certain alterations in the Congress constitution were effected.

### *Events of the year:—*

Swarajist climb down in the Central Assembly. No more "constant, continuous, uniform obstruction." Gandhiji visits South India and Kerala. Vaikom Satyagraha ends. Gandhiji's pact with Travancore authorities. Faridpur Provincial Conference. Deshabandhu's offer of co-operation. Lord Reading's visit to England. Das dies 16th June. Death of Surendranath Banerjee, 6th August. Deshabandhu Memorial. Motilal Nehru accepts seat on the Skeen Committee. Muddiman Committee Report published. Pandit Motilal's motion in Central Assembly for Round Table Conference carried by 72 votes to 45. Dr. Suhrawardy resigns from Swaraj party. Vithalbhai Patel elected President of the Assembly. Swarajist dissensions in Bengal. A. I. C. C. meeting at Patna, 21st September. Yarn franchise an alternative to four anna membership. Political work made over to the Swarajists. Responsivist revolt. Kelkar and Moonje, Jayakar and Khaparde for responsive co-opera-

tion. Slogan "Back to the Lokamanya." The responsivists resign. The Alluri Sitarama Raju rebellion in Andhra. Communal riots throughout the year. The Akali agitation ends.

## FORTY THIRD SESSION—Cawnpore—1925

*President:—Mrs. Sarojini Naidu*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Dr. Murli Lal. General Secretaries: M. A. Ansari. A. Rangaswami Iyengar and Pandit Santanam. Delegates 2688.

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

How shall I stir your hearts, how shall I light that flame that cannot die, so that your slavery, so that your disunion, so that all the things that make you hungry and naked and forlorn, oppressed and battered shall be burnt in that undying fire?.....Is it not the saddest of all shameful ironies that our children whose favourite lullabies are the battle songs of Kurukshetra and whose little feet march gaily to the stirring music of Rajput ballads, should be condemned to depend for the safety of their homes, the protection of their sanctuaries, the security of their mountain and ocean frontiers on the fidelity and strength of foreign arms? We whose boast it is that we kindled the flame of the world's civilisation are alone defrauded of our privilege and have become cowards by compulsion, unfit to answer the world's challenge to our manhood, unable to maintain the sanctity of homes and shrines.....In the battle for liberty, fear is the one forgivable treachery and despair the one unforgivable sin.

*President : —*

Born 13th February 1879. Educated at Hyderabad and Cambridge. Published three volumes of poetry in England which have been translated into many languages. Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 1914. Herself a Bengali Brahmin, she married a Madras non-Brahmin. Joined the Indian National Congress 1915. Went to England in 1920 and did propaganda. Returned Kaiser-i-Hind medal to Government. Member, Working Committee of the Congress. Visited East Africa and Kenya. Work appreciated by Congress. President, Indian National Congress, Cawnpore 1925. Toured America in 1928. Participated in the Salt Satyagraha and was jailed. Delegate to the Second Round Table Conference 1931. Acting President of the Congress 1932. Jailed again. Connected with the Women's movement. A powerful orator. Offered Satyagraha in the individual Civil Disobedience Movement. Was arrested but released prematurely due to bad health. Arrested again on the 9th August 1942 and detained with Gandhiji at Aga Khan Palace. Nursed Gandhiji during famous fast in 1943. Released soon after on grounds of health.

*Details of the Session : —*

Mourned the death of Surendranath Banerjee, Deshabandhu Das and others. Extended welcome to South African delegation. Declared the Area Reservation and Immigration Registration Bill to be a breach of Gandhi Smuts Agreement 1914 and suggested a Round Table Conference to arbitrate. Bengal ordinance condemned. Expulsion of

non-Burman offenders Bill and the Tax on Sea-Passengers Bill of Burma regarded as new attacks on civil liberty. Confirmed Patna A. I. C. C. resolution on franchise. Faith in Civil Disobedience reiterated. Adopted a detailed programme. The work in the country was to train the people to acquire sufficient strength, foreign work to be dissemination of accurate information. Endorsed the Swaraj Party's demands and called on the Swarajists to walk out of the councils if their demands were not accepted. Malaviya moved amendment but main resolution was carried. Hindustani prescribed as the language of the Congress. Foreign department of A. I. C. C. to be opened.

### *Events of the year:—*

Conciliatory speech of Lord Reading in opening the Assembly. The A. I. C. C. meeting at Delhi. Cawnpore Congress decision confirmed. Funds sanctioned for Seva Dal and foreign propaganda. Wordy warfare between Pandit Motilal and Lala Lajpat Rai in the Assembly. Swarajists in the Assembly walk out. Indian National Party formed at Bombay. Compromise meeting between Swarajists and Responsivists at Sabarmati, April. The Sabarmati Pact. Prakasam repudiates the pact. A. I. C. C. at Ahmedabad repudiates Sabarmati Pact. Motilal's proposal's for a committee to report on Dr. Besant's Commonwealth of India Bill turned down. Motilal leaves for England. Sriman Srinivasa Iyengar becomes leader in his place. Fierce Hindu Muslim riots in Calcutta for 6 weeks. Hilton Young Commission report on Currency and Exchange published, August. General Elections in November. In Tamil Nad and Andhra, Congress captures

all elective seats to Central Assembly. Congress reverses in U. P. Congress squabbles in Bengal. Swami Shradhanand shot dead by a Muslim.

## FORTYFOURTH SESSION-Gauhati-1929.

*President* :—Sriman S. Srinivasa Iyengar,

Chairman of the Reception Committee: T. R. Phookun. General Secretaries: Dr. M. A. Ansari, A. Rangaswami Iyengar, Pandit Santanam and V. J. Patel. Delegates: 3000.

### *Extract from Presidential Address :—*

The need of the hour is not philosophy but action, not freedom for the individual but freedom for the nation, not only unity in ideal and object but also unity in methods and action, direction and pace and above all not polemics and projects but organisation and discipline first and last and right through.....There can be only two parties in India, the party of the Government and its adherents that obstruct Swaraj and the party that fights visibly and unceasingly for Swaraj ..... Swaraj is not an intellectual but an emotional proposition. We must cherish it in our hearts with unquenchable faith. Neither genial humour nor mordant sarcasm, neither the persuasion of friends nor the wrath of foes, neither appreciation nor calumny should make our patriotism tepid or qualify the singleness of our purpose. We must therefore become possessed by a passion for Swaraj that is not warped by fallacies and impulses, that will stand for a uniform

and rapid corporate advance in serried masses, that will know no obstacles, that will not wax and wane with the seasons, that will not be daunted by imprisonments or depressed by failures.

*President:—*

Born 11th September 1874. Enrolled in 1898, he soon became the leader of the bar. Later, he was considered the greatest authority on Hindu law and Constitutional law. Member of the Madras Senate, 1912-1916. President of the Madras Social Reform Association, 1916-1920. Advocate General 1916-1920. Returned his C. I. E. and resigned his membership of the Council in 1921. President, Tamil Nad Provincial Congress Committee. Soon became the undisputed leader of South India. Mainly responsible for the sweeping success of Congress candidates in the 1926 election, himself elected to the Central Assembly. Elected President of the Indian National Congress, Gauhati 1926. Succeeded in evolving a formula for Hindu-Muslim Unity. Elected Deputy leader of the Opposition in the Central Assembly. Invited the Congress to Madras in 1927 and the success of the session was mainly due to him. Member of the Working Committee of the Congress for a number of years. Took leading part in the demonstrations against the Simon Commission. Started the Independence of India League and fought the Nehru Report on the question of Independence. Withdrew from public life in 1930. Advocated linked leadership, divorce of religion from politics and maximum results with minimum sacrifice. Died 1941.

### *Details of the Session:—*

Tributes paid to memory of Swami Shraddhananda by Gandhiji and Maulana Mahomed Ali. Condemned the discrimination against Indian settlers in Kenya. Main resolution was on work in Councils. Congressmen were to refuse ministerships or other offices until a satisfactory response was made by the Government to the Nationalist Demand. They were to refuse supplies and throw out budgets and all proposals for legislative enactments by which the bureaucracy proposed to consolidate its powers. But allowed to move resolutions and introduce and support measures and bills necessary for the healthy growth of national life and the advancement of the country's interests and for the protection of Civil liberties and the consequent displacement of the bureaucracy. The policy of invoking emergency legislation for dealing with Bengal detainees was condemned. Work in and outside the country, Hindu Muslim unity, Gurudwara prisoners and Currency were the subjects of suitable resolutions.

### *Events of the year:—*

Swarajist--Nationalist combine in the Central Assembly. The entire grant of the budget thrown out. Government wins by narrow margin on exchange issue. The South African Indian question settled and the Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri sent as Indian Agent to S. Africa. A. I. C. C. at Bombay, May attempts solution of communal problem. Subhas Bose released after four years' imprisonment. Madras Swarajists support Independent ministry of Dr. Subbaroyan. Serious communal riots. Bill to amend the Penal Code. Unity Conference sponsored by Congress.



Bombay, 27th October. Sriman Srinivasa Iyengar presides. Communal formula. A. I. C. C. meets at Bombay. Deals with Bengal detenues. Viceroy invites leading politicians, 5th November. Gandhiji also sees Viceroy. Simon Commission announced. Simon Seven unwanted by every one. Motilal declared it an eye wash. All Parties Manifesto against Simon Commission. Srinivasa Iyengar starts campaigning for boycott of the Commission.

## FORTY FIFTH SESSION—Madras—1927.

*President:—Dr. M. A. Ansari.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: C. M. Muthuranga Mudaliyar. General Secretaries: Shaib Quereshi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose. Delegates : 2694.

### *Extract from Presidential Address:-*

India holds in her hands the remedy for this universal misfortune for she is the key-stone of the arch of Imperialism. Once India is free, the whole edifice will collapse. The best guarantee for the freedom of Asia and the peace of the world is a free and self governing India.....If there be any Hindu brother of mine who imagines that he can get rid of seventy millions of his Muslim fellow-countrymen, he is labouring under a great delusion and the sooner he is disillusioned the better for him and the country. Similarly if any Muslim brother of mine is dreaming of lording it over two hundred and fifty millions of his Hindu countrymen, he is living in a fool's paradise and the sooner he

opens his eyes the better for the Muslim community and India. The Swaraj we are striving for will be neither Hindu Raj nor Muslim Raj. It will be a joint Raj protecting the just and legitimate rights and privileges of all.

*President:—*

Born in 1880. Educated at Allahabad and Deccan. Joined the Edinburgh University in 1901. House Surgeon Charing Cross Hospital. Resident Medical Officer, Lock Hospital and Clinical Assistant, St. Pater's Hospital, London. After ten years' stay in Europe taking the degrees of Doctor of Medicine and Master of Surgery (Edinburgh) returned to India. Organised the All India Medical Mission to Turkey in 1912--1913. Took a leading part in the Home Rule Agitation 1917--1918. Elected President, All India Muslim League 1920. Active leader of the Khilafat and Non-cooperation movement. President, Khilafat Conference, Gaya 1922. President Indian National Congress, Madras 1927. Participated in the Salt Satyagraha and the Civil Disobedience Movement and went to jail. Founder President, Congress Parliamentary Party 1933. Largely responsible for Congress accepting the parliamentary programme. Retired from active politics due to bad health in April 1935 and died 10th May 1936.

*Details of the Session :—*

War danger sounded in a resolution. Declared it would be the duty of the people to refuse to take any part in any Imperialist war or to co-operate with the Government in any way. Congratulated General Avari of Arms Act Satyagraha on his hunger strike. Condemned the proposed

separation of Burma from India. Demanded release of State prisoners. Working Committee authorised to coopt and to confer with other bodies and draft a constitution and place it before a special convention for approval. Main resolution resolved to boycott the Simon Commission "at each stage and in every form". Detailed instructions were given regarding the boycott. Creed of the Congress defined in a separate resolution that "the goal of the Indian people is complete National Independence". Even Mrs. Besant supported the Independence resolution. Other resolutions were on League against Imperialism, China, refusal of passports, boycott of British goods. Hindu Muslim unity, Indians in Africa and lawless laws.

### *Events of the year :—*

Simon Commission arrives in Bombay, 3rd February. Nation wide hartal. Shooting in Madras. Student-Police clash in Calcutta. Simon's letter to Viceroy, 7th February proposing an Indian Committee of seven members to co-operate. Lala Lajpat Rai moves Simon Boycott resolution in Assembly. Motion carried. At Bombay none of the 22 belted knights care to meet the Commission. All Parties Conference at Delhi appoints committee under presidentship of Motilal Nehru to draft constitution. Bardoli Satyagraha under the lead of Vallabhbhai Patel. President Patel threatens to resign. Satyagraha ends in success. Bloomfield enquiry. Nehru Committee present its report. Public Safety Bill introduced in the Assembly but thrown out by casting vote of President. Bomb in the Central Assembly thrown by Bhagat Singh. The Independence of India League started by Srinivasa Iyengar. Lathi charge on

Lalaji at Lahore. Lalaji dies as a result of injuries. Mr. Saunders, Superintendent of Police shot dead in Lahore. Youth movement gathers momentum. Arrests all over the country.

## FORTY SIXTH SESSION-Calcutta-1928.

*President:—***Pandit Motilal Nehru.**

Chairman of the Reception Committee: J. M. Sen Gupta. General Secretaries: M. A. Ansari and Jawaharlal Nehru, Delegates 5221.

### *Extract from Presidential Address :—*

A strange fatality has been pursuing our political activities from a very early stage. We have never been entirely free from serious differences amongst those who have taken up the patriotic duty of liberating their country in right earnest and have not winced at any sacrifice in discharging it to the best of their ability. These differences have inevitably set back the hands of the clock and opened the door to disruptive forces. There have been serious splits among the leaders which have spread with lightning rapidity to the rank and file on almost every occasion when a forward move has been taken or even contemplated. We would do well to profit by the lessons of the past lest the inexorable fate which has been pursuing us for the last twenty years or more overtake us..... We need both patience and impatience. Patience with those differ from us and impatience with ourselves.

*President:—*

"My father was more practical and prosaic. He was a great organiser and had little of religion in him. He had always been a fighter, ready to receive and give hard blows. Those whom he considered fools, he suffered not at all, or at any rate not gladly; and opposition he could not tolerate. It seemed to him a challenge requiring the use of a broom. The two, my father and Deshabandhu,—unlike in some ways as they were—fitted in and made a remarkable and effective combination for the leadership of a party, each in some measure supplying the other's deficiencies. And between the two of them, there was absolute confidence"—Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

"Panditji and Jayakar, Panditji and Lalaji, Panditji and Iyengar—it was all a series of conflicts of the learned Pandit with Bombay, Panjab and Madras. A masterful personality like the Pandit could not be all things to all men, nor could he be the same to himself all along. Lesser men surely could feel quite at ease over their quarrels"—Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya.

*Details of the session:—*

Reciprocated greetings from friends in foreign countries. Contemplated a Pan Asiatic Federation. Reiterated Madras resolution on War danger. Congratulations to Vallabhbhai Patel on the success of the Bardoli Satyagraha. Congressmen not to have social intercourse with Government Officials. Demand for responsible Government in Indian States. Tributes to memory of Lalaji, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Lord Sinha and Gopala-

krishnayya. Main resolution was on Nehru Report. Gandhiji moved a resolution accepting Nehru report's recommendation of Dominion Status for two years. Jawaharlal moved an amendment reiterating adherence to independence. Compromise formula evolved. Ultimatum to British Government to accept the Nehru Report within one year or the Congress would launch non-violent non-cooperation. Propaganda for independence to continue. Detailed programme of work for the year issued. Other resolutions dealt with police raids and searches in Lahore, Boycott of British goods, League against Imperialism etc. Mass rally of 50,000 workers in Congress Pandal who saluted the national flag and supported Independence.

### *Events of the year :—*

Sub Committee appointed to give effect to the Congress programme, Gandhiji arrested at Calcutta in March and fined Re.1/- for burning foreign cloth. Gandhiji's tour of Burma and Andhra Desa. Arrests in Bombay, Panjab and U. P. later culminating in the Meerut Conspiracy Case. President Patel rules out the Public Safety bill as owing to Meerut Case, the matter was sub judice. Bombay meeting of the A. I. C. C. Number of proposals for Congress reorganisation. Resolved to prepare a Congress Manual. Shiv Prasad Gupta to represent India at the Congress of League against Imperialism. Resolved to make revolutionary changes in the present economic and social structure of society, Working Committee resolves to advise members of Legislatures to resign but decision adjourned. Much repression in the country. "India in bondage" banned. Bhagat Singh and Dutt sentenced to transportation for life.

Group case in Calcutta. Textile strike in Bombay. Strike in Jute industry in Bengal. Hunger strike of Lahore Conspiracy prisoners and martyrdom of Jatindranath Das. Lahore Conspiracy Trial Ordinance. Martyrdom of Phongy Wizaya. Lord Irwins talks with leaders. Viceregal train bombed.

## FORTY SEVENTH SESSION—Lahore—1928.

*President:—***Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.**

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Dr. Saif-ud-din. Kitchlew. General Secretaries: Syed Mahomed, Sri Prakasa and Jairamdas Daulatram.

### *Extract from Presidential Address:—*

We long for peace and the hand of fellowship will always be stretched but to all who may care to grasp it. But behind the hand will be a body which will not bend to injustice and a mind that will not surrender on any vital point.....Any great movement for liberation today must necessarily be a mass movement and mass movements must essentially be peaceful except in times of organised revolt.....We cannot command success. But success often comes to those who dare and act; it seldom goes to the timid who are ever afraid of the consequences. We play for high stakes, and if we seek to achieve great things, it can only be through great dangers. Whether we succeed soon or late, none but ourselves can stop us from high endeavour and from writing a noble page in our country's long and splendid history.

*President:—*

Born 14th November 1889, Educated in England. Called to the bar. Secretary, Home Rule League, 1918. Member, A. I. C. C. since 1918. Staunch non-cooperator. Jailed in 1921 and 1922. General Secretary of the Congress, 1923. President, Allahabad Municipality 1924. European trip, 1926. Attended Congress of Oppressed Nationalities, 1927 Brussels. Moved Independence resolution at Madras Congress. General Secretary of Congress 1927. President, All India Trade Union Congress, Jharia 1928. Secretary, Independence of India League. President National Congress, Lahore 1929. Arrested, April 1930. Released in October and again arrested. Death of Motilal Nehru. Gandhi-Irwin Truce. Agrarian movement in U. P. Arrested December 1931. 2½ years' R. I. Released August 1933. Arrested February 1934. 2 years R. I. Released September 1935 and left for Germany where Kamala Nehru was ailing. Kamala died shortly after. President, National Congress, Lucknow 1935 and again Faizpur 1937. Contributed to Congress election success, 1936. Resigned from Working Committee 1937. Great Anti Fascist, helped Spanish Republicans. Visited China. President, National Planning Committee. Sentenced to four years R. I. November 1940. Released December 1941. Represented Congress in talks with Cripps. Arrested 9th August 1942 and since detained at Ahmednagar Fort. Recently transferred to U. P. Jail.

*Details of the Session:—*

Appreciated the supreme self sacrifice of Jatindranath Das and Phongy Wizaya. Deplored the bombing of



Viceregal train and congratulated Lord Irwin and party on their escape. Main resolution was about Independence. The entire scheme of the Nehru Report was declared to have lapsed. Declined to be represented at the proposed Round Table Conference under the existing circumstances. Congressmen were asked to resign from legislatures. Authorised A. I. C. C. to launch Civil Disobedience. Date of Congress session altered to February or March. The resolution on the communal question assured the minorities that "no solution would be acceptable which did not give full satisfaction to the parties concerned". Declared that every obligation and concession inherited by Independent India would be strictly subject to investigation and unjust concessions and obligations would be repudiated. Other resolutions dealt with Indian States, East Africa, refusal of passports etc. Election for Working Committee gives place to nomination. Sriman Srinivasa Iyengar and Subhas Bose with their followers walked out and formed the Congress Democratic Party.

*Events of the year:—*

Working Committee, 2nd January issues Independence day declaration. Independence Day celebrated all over the country. Gandhiji's famous eleven points. Subhas Bose sentenced to one year. All Congress Legislators resign. Working Committee at Sabarmati in February authorises Gandhiji to start Civil Disobedience. A. I. C. C. at Ahmedabad approves. Gandhiji intimates Viceroy through Reginald Reynolds. March to Dandi starts, 12th March. Salt Law broken, 6th April. Salt Satyagraha throughout the country. Congress President arrested. Shooting in Madras and Peshawar.

Lathi charges the order of the day. Many new ordinances. Gandhiji arrested and detained. Working Committee at Allahabad in May enlarges scope of Civil disobedience. Wadala and Dharsana Salt raids. 115 killed and 420 injured by firing officially till May. Martial Law in Sholapur. Congress Committees declared unlawful. Slacombe Interview. Over a lakh of people in jail. Return of R. T. C. delegates. Sapru-Jayakar pourparlers. Gandhiji and Working Committee released. Motilal's death. Gandhi-Irwin Truce. General amnesty. Execution of Bhagat Singh and his comrades.

#### FORTYEIGHTH SESSION-Karachi-1931.

*President:— Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Dr. Choitram Gidwani. General Secretaries: Syed Mahommed and Jawaharlal Nehru.

#### *Extract from Presidential Address:—*

We must have the full power to make mistakes. We may gratefully receive British advice; never dictation. The fact is that the British army is an army of occupation. Defence is a misnomer. Frankly the army is for defending British interests and British men and women against any internal uprising. My interest lies in helping the down trodden to rise from their state and be on a level with the tallest in the land. Thank God, the gospel of Truth and Non-violence has given these an inkling of their dignity and the power they possess. Much still remains to be done. But let us make up our minds that we exist for them, not they for us. Let us shed our petty rivalries and jealousies, religious

feuds and let every one realise that the Congress represents and exists for the toiling millions and it will become an irresistible power working not for greed of power but for the sake of common humanity.

*President:—*

Born 1875. Passed the pleader's test and started practising at Godhra. Later went to England and was called to the bar. Shifted his practice to Ahmedabad. Flourishing lawyer. Entered public life in 1916 as an associate of Gandhiji. Came into prominence as a national leader, first at Kaira Satyagraha and later Nagpur Flag Satyagraha. President, Ahmedabad Municipality 1927-1928. Led the Bardoli no-Tax Campaign. Participated in Salt Satyagraha and went to jail 1930. President, Indian National Congress, Karachi 1931. Arrested along with Gandhiji in January 1932, and imprisoned without trial under Regulation III of 1818 till July 1934. Chairman, Congress Parliamentary Sub Committee 1935-1939. Was in charges of the Congress election machinery. Largely responsible for the success of Congress candidates. The chief Right Winger in the Congress. Negotiated with the Thakore Saheb in the Rajkot affair 1938-39. Was arrested and detained under the Defence of India Regulations 1940. Released 1941. Arrested again on the 9th August 1942 and has since been detained in the Ahmednagar Fort. Recently transferred to Yerrawada Prison.

*Details of the Session:—*

Recorded admiration of the bravery and sacrifice of Bhagat Singh and his comrades though disapproving of political violence. Declared the execution to be an act of wanton

vengeance. Condemned the Government's niggardly policy regarding the release of politicals. Noted with pride the self sacrifice of Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi. The cardinal resolution was on the Gandhi Irwin Settlement. The standpoint of the Congress was embodied therein. Gandhiji was authorised to represent the Congress at the Second Round Table Conference. Resolution on Fundamental Rights. Other resolutions dealt with Civil Disobedience sufferers, communal riots, prohibition, Khaddar, peaceful picketting, Frontier people, N. W. F. Province and Indians in South and East Africa. Separation of Burma was condemned but recognised the right of an independent Burma State. Noteworthy feature of the Session was the large attendance of Khudai Khitmatgars from the Frontier. The Congress was held in open air. No pandal or tent. A few young men organised black flag demonstrations against Gandhiji and presented him with black flowers for not having saved Bhagat Singh's life.

### *Events of the year:—*

Lord Irwin gives place to Lord Willingdon. Working Committee in June. Meanwhile 'complaints of breach of the Gandhi Irwin Settlement from all parts of India. Gandhiji visits Simla in July. Gandhi-Emerson correspondence. Gandhiji decides not to go to London, 13th August. A.I.C.C. in August condemns attempted assassination of acting Governor of Bombay. National flag to be composed of Saffron, White and Green colours with the charka inset. Gandhi leaves for Delhi. Pandit Malaviya and Sarojini cancel their passages to England. Talks between Viceroy, Gandhi, Vallabhbhai, Jawaharlal and Pattani. Gandhi-Emerson Settlement. Gandhiji sails for England. Vallabhbhai and

Bhulabhai withdraw from the Bardoli Enquiry. Agrarian crisis in United Provinces. Trouble brewing in the Frontier. Gandhiji returns from London, 28th December. Jawaharlal, Sherwani and Tandon arrested. Arrest of Khan Abdul Gaffur Khan and Dr. Khan Saheb. Gandhiji's attempt to interview Viceroy. Rebuff of Lord Willingdon. Working Committee decides on Civil Disobedience. Gandhiji and the Congress President arrested. Ordinance Raj. Lathi Charges. Wholesale arrests.

## BANNED SESSIONS 1932 & 1933.

### 1932

In 1932, the Congress was outlawed. But a session of the Congress was held in April 1932 at Delhi. Despite Police vigilance, over 500 delegates attended. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the President elect was arrested enroute. Four resolutions were passed reiterating complete Independence as the goal of the Congress, endorsing the revival of Civil Disobedience, expressing complete faith in Gandhiji's leadership and reaffirming deep faith in non-violence.

### 1933

In April 1933, a session was held at Calcutta. Pandit Malaviya was again elected President but he was arrested. Mrs. Nellie Sen Gupta presided. The session reiterated the 1932 resolutions. An extract from Malaviyaji's speech is given below.

### *Extract from Presidential Address:—*

The Congress offered Civil disobedience in defence of the rights of the people which were attacked by the Government by means of the ordinances passed under existing laws. This right of disobedience or resistance is a most valuable

constitutional weapon in the hands of a people, by the fear of which they can force legislators or despots to exercise their powers within the limits of reason and by which they can re-establish their natural rights and liberties when they have been attacked or invaded. The greatest of our liberties is the liberty of opinion. England has gone on preparing a constitution for the future government of India with the help of some Indians of its own selection and liking. It has framed the constitution under the claim that it is the right and moral obligation of the British Parliament to determine to what extent and with what limitations and safeguards it will allow India to administer its own affairs. I appeal to my countrymen to wake up to the reality of the situation.

### DELHI TO CALCUTTA 1932-1933.

In spite of severe repression, Civil Disobedience goes on merrily. Intense boycott of British goods. Illegal literature in spate. Nonpayment of rent in several places. Premier Ramsay Mac Donald's Communal Award announced, 17th August. Gandhiji decides to fast unto death. Gandhi-Hoare-Mac Donald correspondence. Intense feeling in the country. The fast starts, 20th September. Leaders of all communities in consultation with themselves and with Gandhiji. Temples and public places thrown open to Harijans. Yeravada Pact signed by leaders of Harijans and Hindu and Congress leaders, 24th September. Harijans to forego separate electorates subject to certain other safeguards. British Government accept the Yeravada Pact. Fast broken, 26th September. In the third Round Table Conference, Sastri Sethna and Jinnah excluded. Gandhiji's fight with the authorities against "sudden deprivation of opportunities to

serve Harijans" from jail. Guruvayur Temple Referendum. Overwhelming majority for Temple entry. Harijan Sevak Sangh organised and Harijan started as a weekly.

### CALCUTTA TO WORLI 1933-34.

Gandhiji's self purificatory fast for 21st days, 8th May. Aney, acting President of Congress suspends Civil disobedience for 6 weeks and later for another 6 weeks. Informal conference of Congressmen at Poona, 12th July. Authorised Gandhiji to seek interview with Viceroy. Viceroy declines. Mass Civil disobedience suspended and individual civil disobedience allowed. Gandhiji arrested on 1st August and sentenced to one year. Fasts in jail against refusal of facilities for Harijan work. Released 23rd August. Decides to abstain from Civil Disobedience till August 1934. Death of Mrs. Besant, 20th September and of Vithalbhai Patel, 22nd September. Extensive tour of India by Gandhiji for Harijan work. Earthquake in Bihar affecting 15000 square miles. Civil disobedience movement suspended, 7th April. Dr. Ansari Dr. B. C. Roy and Satyamurti form the Swaraj Party. A. I. C. C. meeting at Patna. Parliamentary programme approved. Swaraj Party becomes integral part of Congress. First Conference of Congress Socialist Party held at Patna, 17th May. Bomb thrown at Gandhiji in Poona. Gandhiji fasts for seven days against intolerance towards opponents.

### FORTYNINTH SESSION-Bombay-1934.

*President* :—**Babu Rajendra Prasad.**

Chairman of the Reception Committee: K. F. Nari-  
man. General Secretaries: J. B. Kripalani, Syed  
Mahommed and Jairamdas Daulatram.

*Extract from Presidential Address :—*

We have to remember that the price for freedom must be paid before we can get it and while we have every reason to be proud of what has been done and what the country has suffered, it is after all yet inadequate for the great object we have in view. The task we have taken upon ourselves is great and glorious. It requires inexhaustible patience, unflinching determination and unending sacrifice. Time and world forces are helping us and above all God is with us in this great epic struggle of an unarmed people fighting with the weapons of satyagraha, of Truth and non-violence a most powerful government armed cap-a-pie and equipped with the latest engines of destruction devised by science and human ingenuity. For us there is no turning back. The goal is clear. It is nothing short of independence.....The method too is crystal clear. It is active dynamic non-violent mass action. We may fail once, we may fail twice but we are bound to succeed some day.

*President:—*

Born 3rd December 1884. Brilliant scholastic career. Professor, University Law College 1914-1916. Later became the leader of the bar at Patna. Member, Senate of Patna University since foundation. Collaborated with Gandhiji in Champaran Agrarian Struggle, 1917. Gave up his extensive practice in 1920. Registrar, Bihar Vidyapith. Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Gaya Congress, 1922. President Bihar Provincial Congress Committee for a number of years. Undisputed leader of Bihar. Participated in the Salt Satyagraha and the Civil



Disobedience movement 1930-32 and was jailed several times. Member of the Working Committee of the Congress for a long time. Organised the Bihar Earthquake Relief and did yeomen service. President Indian National Congress, Worli, Bombay, October 1934. Prominent Right Winger. Member, Congress Parliamentary Sub Committee. Acting President of the Congress, 1939 after the resignation of Subhas Bose. Offered Satyagraha in the Individual Civil Disobedience Campaign. Arrested in August 1942 and has since been detained in Hazaribaug Central Jail in Bihar.

### *Details of the Session:—*

Endorsed the A.I.C.C. resolution on the Parliamentary Board and its policy and programme. Congratulated the nation on the heroic sacrifices made and the sufferings undergone. An All India Village Industries Association to be started under guidance of Gandhiji. Congress exhibitions hereafter to be organised by A. I. S. A. and A. I. V. I. A. and not by the Reception Committee. A number of changes in the Congress constitution were effected. Labour franchise and habitual wearing of Khaddar necessary for elective membership. Congress delegation reduced to a maximum of 2000. A. I. C. C. reduced to half its strength. Delegates to be elected at the rate of 1 to 500 primary members. Delegates were thus made the representatives of the nation. Gandhiji wanted the creed to be changed to "truthful and non-violent" in place of "peaceful and legitimate" methods. But the proposal was circulated to the provinces for opinion. Resolutions on

Swadeshi, status of Indian settlers overseas and constructive programme. Gandhiji resigns his primary membership and retires from Congress.

*Events of the year :—*

All India Village Industries Association formed, 26th October. General elections to the Central Legislative Assembly. Congress wins convincing victory. Captures all elective seats in Tamil Nad and Andhra. The Congress Party's triumphs in the Central Assembly. Death of Abhyankar, Sherwani and Gidwani. Government of India Act receives Royal assent. The Working Committee rejects the Act outright and demands a constitution drawn up by a Constituent Assembly. The Ottawa Pact denounced in the Assembly as a scandalous piece of jobbery. Earthquake in Quetta. A. I. C. C. organise relief work. Hindu Muslim Unity talks between Rajendra Prasad and Jinnah but abortive. A. I. C. C. defines Congress attitude towards State subjects. The Working Committee endorses the A. I. C. C. declaration. Golden Jubilee of the Congress celebrated throughout the country. Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya's History of the Indian National Congress published. Yone Noguchi, Japanese poet visits Gandhiji and Tagore. Gandhiji has a nervous breakdown for over ten weeks. Gandhiji presides over Gandhi Seva Sangha. Negro delegation to India tours the country.

**FIFTIETH SESSION—Lucknow—1936.**

**President: Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru**

**General Secretaries: Acharya Kripalani and Jairamdas Daulatram.**

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

Meanwhile, the decay of British Imperialism in India becomes ever more apparent. It cannot by its very nature solve our economic problems and rid us of our terrible poverty, which it has largely itself created. It subsists on a normal fare of the fiercest repression and a denial of civil and even personal liberty. It surrounds us with a wide network of spies and among the pillars of its administration are the tribe of informers and agent provocateurs and the like. The more incompetent it grows, the less it likes being told so. But this does not prevent it from indulging in reckless allegations about others. The Congress by its stress on peaceful and effective action has drawn the youth of this country into its fold and all traces of terroristic activity would long have vanished but for the policy of the Government which feeds the roots out of which a helpless violence grows. But terrorism or no terrorism, a Government which adopts the methods which have long prevailed in Midnapore and elsewhere in Bengal stands self condemned.

*President :—*

"The years I have spent in prison ! Sitting alone, wrapped in my thoughts, how many seasons I have seen go by, following each other into oblivion ! How many moons have I watched wax and wane, and the pageant of the stars moving along inexorably and majestically ! How many yesterdays of my youth lie buried here ; and sometimes I see the ghosts of these yesterdays rise up, bringing poignant memories, and whispering to me : "Was it worth

while?" There is no hesitation about the answer. If I were given the chance to go through my life again, with my present knowledge and experience added, I would no doubt try to make many changes in my personal life. I would endeavour to improve in many ways on what I had previously done, but my major decisions in public affairs would remain untouched. Indeed I could not vary them, for they were stronger than myself and a force beyond my control drove me to them." From An Autobiography by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

### *Details of the Session:—*

Tributes to the memory of dead patriots and greetings to prisoners and exiles. Condemned arrest of Subhas Bose. Noticed the wide spread and intensive suppression of civil liberties and declared determination to carry on struggle for freedom till Independence is won. Thanked Romain Rolland for invitation to World Congress against War and Fascism. Declared the opposition to participating in any Imperial war. Expressed sympathy for Abyssinia. Considered the Government of India Act facilitated and perpetuated the domination and exploitation of the people. But Congress was to contest the elections to the provincial legislatures. Opined it was inadvisable to commit itself to any decision regarding acceptance of office. A Mass Contacts Committee was to be appointed. Sympathised with Indians abroad in their disabilities. It was decided to draw up an All India agrarian programme after consultation with the provincial Congress Committees. Declared the struggles in the States have to be carried on by the people of the States themselves.

### *Events of the year:—*

Exhibition of Khadi and village industries at Lucknow organised by A. I. S. A. and A. I. V. I. A. Gandhiji decides to settle down at Segaon. All India Literary Conference at Nagpur, Gandhiji-Ambedkar meeting, April 30. Dr. Ansari dies, May 10. Abbas Tyabji dies in June. Congress election Manifesto issued. Satyamurti's election campaign. Jawaharlal's whirlwind tour. Anti Congress Parties try to form united front against the Congress. Congress Parliamentary Board functions. Selection of candidates to stand on Congress ticket. Unparalleled mass enthusiasm.

### FIFTY FIRST SESSION—Faizpur—1937.

*President :—Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Shankar Rao Deo. General Secretaries: J. B. Kripalani and Jairamdas Daulatram.

### *Extract from Presidential Address:—*

' The elections have many things to teach us but the most outstanding fact is this: where we went to the masses direct, we won overwhelmingly. Our partial lack of success in some provinces was clearly due to the Congress organisations there being confined to the cities and having little contact with the peasantry. We must remedy these failings and speak more and more the language of the masses and fashion our policy to meet their needs. We must carry the Congress organisation to every village, the Congress message to every mud hut..... It is difficult to

live in this country surrounded by this human desolation and misery unspoken often and harder to bear because of that. We talk of Swaraj and Independence but in human terms it means relief to the masses from their unutterable sorrow and misery. Ultimately all that we work for resolves into that and if we have a chance to give such relief even in a small measure we cannot reject it.

*President:—*

"Indeed, I often wonder I represent anyone at all and I am inclined to think that I do not, though many have kindly and friendly feelings towards me. I have become a queer mixture of the East and West, out of place every where, at home nowhere. Perhaps my thoughts and approach to life are more akin to what is called Western than Eastern, but India clings to me as she does to all her children in innumerable ways; and behind me lie, somewhere in the subconscious, racial memories of a hundred, or whatever the number may be, generations of Brahmans. I cannot get rid of either that past inheritance or my recent acquisitions. They are both part of me, and though they help me in both the East and the West, they also create in me a feeling of spiritual loneliness not only in public activities but in life itself. I am a stranger and alien in the West. I cannot be of it. But in my own country also, sometimes, I have an exile's feeling"—A self criticism—from An Autobiography by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

*Details of the Session:—*

Condoled on the death of Dr. M. A. Ansari, Abbas Tyabji, Chidambaram Pillay and others. Considered the

report of Sri V. K. Krishna Menon on the World Peace Congress. Declared elimination of Imperialism necessary to outlaw war. Avowed the separation of Burma was being enforced against the wishes of a large body of Burman opinion and in favour of the interests of British Imperialism. Condemned the non intervention policy of the British Government in the Spanish struggle and assured the Spanish people of their solidarity. Held that the same level of democratic and self governing institutions should be extended to the Excluded Areas. Noted with satisfaction the election results and decided to hold an All India Convention of Congress legislators and A. I. C. C. Members. The question of office acceptance was postponed to the Convention. The session was notable for the struggle between office wallahs and their opponents.

### *Events of the Year:—*

Gandhiji visits Travancore. General elections result in substantial victory for Congress. Control over eight out of eleven Provinces. In Madras, all the general seats captured. A. I. C. C. in March authorises acceptance of office but ministerships not to be accepted till Congress was satisfied that Governors would not use special powers of interference. Anti Reforms Act day, 1st April. Interim Ministries. Governors give necessary assurance and Congress ministries in six provinces. Prohibition experiment in Salem. Ministries go ahead with Congress programme. A. I. C. C. in October passes unhappily worded resolution on repression. Gandhiji's condemnation, Nehru thinks of resignation. Muslim League at Lucknow declares Inde-

pendence as its objective. Gandhiji condemns use of force by Congress ministries in labour disputes. Hindu Maha Sabha also goes in for Independence. Question of Andamans prisoners and Bengal detenues. Bombay Legislative Assembly passes Temple Entry Bill. Also declares itself against conferring of titles. Other provinces follow suit. Ministerial crisis in United Provinces and Bihar. Governor's interference in release of political prisoners. Crisis resolved.

## FIFTYSECOND SESSION—Haripura—1938.

*President:—Subhas Chandra Bose.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Darbar Gopaldas Desai. General Secretary: J. B. Kripalani.

*Extract from Presidential Address:—*

I know that there are friends who think that after freedom is won, the Congress Party having achieved its objective, should wither away. Such a conception is erroneous. The party that wins freedom for India should be also the party that will put into effect the entire programme of postwar reconstruction. Only those who have won power can handle it properly.....No, there can be no question of the Congress party withering away after political freedom has been won. On the contrary, the party will have to take over power, assume responsibility for administration and put through its programme of reconstruction. Only then will it fulfil its role.....I shall voice your feelings by saying that all India fervently hopes and prays that Mahatma Gandhi may be spared to our



nation for many, many years to come. India cannot afford to lose him and certainly not at this hour. We need him to keep our people united. We need him to keep our struggle free from bitterness. We need him for the cause of Indian independence. What is more—we need him for the cause of humanity. Ours is a struggle not only against British Imperialism—but against world imperialism as well, of which the former is the keystone.

*President :—*

Born 27th January 1897. Entered the Indian Civil Service but resigned from the same to join the non-cooperation movement in 1921. Arrested along with Desha-bandhu Das 1921-1922. Manager, Forward 1922-1924. Member, Calcutta Corporation and Bengal Legislative Council, 1924. Chief Executive Officer, Calcutta Corporation 1924. Arrested under Regulation III in 1924, released in 1927. Took prominent part in the Simon boycott. G. O. C. of Volunteers at Calcutta Congress 1928. Mayor of Calcutta 1930. President, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee for many years. Participated in the Salt Satyagraha and was jailed. In 1932 interned as State Prisoner, but released and asked to go to Europe for medical treatment. President, Indian National Congress, Haripura 1938. Re-elected President, Tripuri Session 1939, but resigned due to differences with the Congress High Command. Inaugurated the Forward Bloc. Was elected member of the Central Assembly while in prison, 1940. Was subsequently released due to ill health. Missing from his Calcutta residence since 26th January 1941. Subsequently the Government stated he

had gone over to Germany and was with the Axis Powers.

### *Details of the Session :—*

Main resolution was on Federation. Reiterated its condemnation of the proposed Federal Scheme. Called upon the people and Congress ministries to prevent its inauguration. Deprecated the ban on Congress organisations in Midnapur. Dealt with National education and appointed an All India Education board to work out a programme of basic national education. Assured the minorities of the widest scope for their development. Declared that struggles in Indian States or parliamentary activity must not be undertaken in the name of the Congress but assured the States people of its solidarity with them. Manifesto on Ministerial resignation in Bihar and U. P. Declared that Congress cannot associate itself with any activities incompatible with its basic principles while approving of Kisan Sabhas in general. Constitution Committee. Demanded release of Guidallo of Assam. Resolution on Indians overseas, Zanzibar and clove boycott, Indians in Ceylon, China, Palestine, Foreign policy and war Danger and Excluded Areas.

### *Events of the year :—*

Conference of Gandhi Seva Sangh in March. Gandhiji tours the North West Frontier. C. P. Cabinet crisis. Dr. Khare resigns and other ministers are dismissed. The Working Committee condemns the action of Dr. Khare and A. I. C. C. takes disciplinary action against him.

Pandit Shukla, becomes Premier of C. P. Gandhiji condemns role of C. P. Governor. Non-interference in affairs of Indian States. Harijan demand for seat in C. P. Cabinet. Conference of provincial ministers at Delhi, October. National Planning Committee set up. The A. I. C. C. closely follows events in Europe. Condemns the Munich pact. National Planning Committee starts deliberations under presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru. Good record of the Congress ministries. Takaoka, Member of Japanese Parliament visits India. Death of Maulana Shaukat Ali. Presidential election to the Congress. Contest between Subhas Chandra Bose and Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya. Subhas wins by thumping majority. Gandhiji's comments thereon in the Harijan. Civil disobedience in Rajkot and its suspension. Gandhiji goes to Rajkot on peace mission. Fast unto death 3rd March. Viceroy's intervention sought. Maurice Gwyer appointed arbitrator.

### FIFTY THIRD SESSION—Tripuri-1939

*President : Subhas Chandra Bose.*

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Seth Govind Das,  
General Secretary: J. B. Kripalani.

*Extract from Presidential Address :—*

The time is long past when we could have adopted a passive attitude and waited for the Federal Scheme to be imposed on us. The problem no longer is as to when the Federal Scheme will be forced down our throats. The problem is as to what we should do if the Federal scheme is conveniently shelved for a few years till peace is stabili-

sed in Europe There is no doubt that once there is stable peace in Europe whether through a Four Power pact or through some other means, Great Britain will adopt a strong Empire policy. The fact that she is now showing some signs of trying to conciliate the Arabs as against the Jews in Palestine is because she is feeling herself weak in the international sphere. In my opinion therefore we should submit our national demand to the British Government in the form of an ultimatum and give a certain time limit within which a reply is to be expected. If no reply is received within this period or if an unsatisfactory reply is received, we should resort to such sanctions as we possess in order to enforce our national demand. The sanctions that we possess today are mass Civil Disobedience or Satyagraha.

*President:—*

"Subhas Bose is a marvel of Youth. He has poured into India's political mould the smelting ore of his rich personality. He is a dynamic force in its political panorama. He blossomed at the close of its cultural renaissance. He shines like a polychromatic sunset which paints dyes unsuspected in the day that preceded it. If he has faults, they are the weakness of his time. They adorn him like the spots on the peacock's plumage. In politics he is not the child that gathers painted shells on a beach but an enfant terrible who ploughs a lonely furrow. He is individualistic in preserving perfect independence of mind in a herd. He prefers thinking 'fire' to mere fireworks. But he adheres to the rational even as he adores the emotional."—A Critique.

*Details of the Session:—*

Met under special circumstances as President Subhas Bose was very ill and Gandhiji was fasting in Rajkot. Subhas Bose was too ill to preside over some sittings and so Maulana Azad conducted the proceedings on those occasions. Main resolution was moved by Gobind Vallabh Pant. Declared its implicit confidence in Gandhiji and the old Working Committee and requested the President to appoint the new Working Committee in accordance with the wishes of Gandhiji. Stormy debate. Rajaji's parable of leaky boat. Resolution carried by large majority. Called upon all Congress organisations to get ready for a nation wide struggle, promote unity and eliminate disruptive forces. A. I. C. C. authorised to make such changes in Congress constitution as would obviate abuses and make the organisation efficient. Disapproved of and dissociated itself from British foreign policy. Welcome to the Wafd delegation. Resolutions on happenings in Palestine, conditions of Indians overseas, Indian States and India's sympathy with China.

*Events of the year :—*

Gwyer's award in the Rajkot dispute. Gandhiji decides to renounce the Award. A. I. C. C. at Calcutta. Stormy scenes. Subhas Bose resigns presidentship. Babu Rajendra Prasad elected in his place. Old Working Committee reappointed. Gandhiji apologises for coercive conduct in Rajkot. Subhas Bose inaugurates Forward Bloc, 21st May. Tours the country. Total prohibition in Bombay City. 1st

August. Working Committee at Wardha notice war danger. Left Consolidation Committee. Disciplinary action against Subhas for three years. Defence of India Bill passed in Central Assembly. War in Europe. Gandhiji's interview with Viceroy Working Committee at Wardha, 8th September. Sub Committee appointed to deal with situation created by War. Viceroy's talks with Rajendra Prasad and Nehru. A. I. C. C. at Wardha 9th October supports Working Committee stand. Working Committee asks Congress ministries to resign, 22nd October. By 8th November all the 8 ministries resign. Constitution suspended. Working Committee at Wardha 22nd December calls for intense constructive work. Gandhiji's interview with Viceroy.

## FIFTY FOURTH SESSION-Ramgarh-1940.

*President :—* Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

General Secretary : Acharya J. B. Kripalani.

*Extract from Presidential Address :—*

Though this cry was raised in India, in fact it was not of India only but it was the agonised cry of wronged humanity, whose hopes had so often before been betrayed. Twentyfive years ago, the world was plunged into one of the biggest infernos of death and destruction known to history and yet this was but a preparation for a still bigger catastrophe. The world was bewitched and its hopes were kindled by cries of freedom for small nations, collective security, self determination, disarmament, League of

Nations and international arbitration and of similar high sounding phrases. But what was the result in the end? Every cry proved false; every vision that seemed so real to us vanished as a dream. Again nations are being plunged into the blood and fire of War. Should we part with reason and reality so completely as not even to ask why this is being done and how this affects our destiny before plunging into this deluge of death and destruction. Our success depends upon three factors—unity, discipline and full confidence in Mahatma Gandhiji's leadership. The glorious record of our movement was due to his great leadership and it is only under his leadership that we can look forward to a future of successful achievement.

*President:—*

“When Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was elected as president of the Ramgarh Congress in March 1940 by 1,854 Votes as against only 183 recorded for his opponent, there was no surprise expressed nor were any surmises made by the Indian Press. With them, it was a foregone conclusion. In the British Press, however, all kinds of conjectures were made and conclusions drawn. The election, it was said, was intended to demonstrate that Congress stands for Muslims and that Muslims stand by the Congress. It was also suggested that it was a sop to those whose sympathies were for the Muslim League, but which might yet be won for the Congress. It was no such thing however. The Hindu-Muslim tension which is alleged to be worse to-day than ever before had nothing to do with the election. His name was on every lip in 1938, and if he had not withdrawn his name at the eleven-

th hour he would have been elected President of the Tripuri Congress in 1939 by an overwhelming majority if not unanimously" — Mahadeo Desai.

### *Details of the Session:—*

The Ramgarh Session was taken up entirely with the crisis brought about by the war and rightly passed only one lengthy resolution on that all-absorbing question. Protested against the declaration of India as a belligerent country without any reference to the people. Declared the British Government was carrying on the war fundamentally for imperialist ends and so Congressmen and those under Congress influence cannot help in the prosecution of the war. Avowed that nothing short of complete independence is acceptable. Reiterated its faith in a constituent assembly, elected on the basis of adult suffrage. Opined that the constitution must be based on independence, democracy and national unity. The country was asked to take to the constructive programme seriously.

### EVENTS SINCE RAMGARH 1940.

Death of Deenabandhu Andrews. Gandhiji's long talk with Viceroy, 2nd July. Working Committee at Delhi repudiates non-violence against foreign aggression. Demand for National Government. Gandhiji absolved of responsibility of leadership of Congress. Subhas Bose arrested. Abdul Gaffur Khan resigns from Working Committee. Poona Session of the A. I. C. C. 25th July. Rajaji's famous offer to British Government. Viceroy offers expanded Executive Council. Congress rejects. With the approval of the Working Committee (October) Gandhiji



*launches individual civil disobedience.* Vinoba Bhave the first Satyagrahi. Jawaharlal Nehru sentenced to four years, 31st October. Harijan and allied newspapers suspend publication. Government forbids press to report progress of civil disobedience campaign. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad arrested at Allahabad and sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment. List of Satyagrahis submitted to Gandhiji by Provincial Congress Committees Rajagopalachari and Satyamurti arrested. Gandhiji suspends satyagraha from 25th December to 4th January as a good will gesture for Christmas.

#### 1941.

Throughout 1941, the Individual Civil Disobedience movement continued and slowly spread to remote corners of India. Over 25,000 were arrested and convicted and fines amounting to nearly six lakhs of rupees were imposed. On December 3 Government decided to release all satyagrahis. Working Committee immediately met at Bardoli on 23rd December. Relieved Gandhiji on his request of Congress leadership because of fundamental differences over interpretation of non-violence. Resolutions adopted regarding "the recent extraordinary happenings in Burma and notably in the City of Rangoon." Publication of the resolution was banned by the Government. Called upon the people to remain cool in the face of danger and resolved to start volunteer organisations to train and help people in self defence and relief. Sympathised with the people in Japanese occupied countries. Warned dealers against hoarding and profiteering and asked the villagers to grow more food.

1942.

Working Committee and A. I. C. C. meet at Wardha in January when Gandhiji agreed to lead the Congress on its own terms. Restarted Harijan and other allied weeklies. Death of Jamnalal Bajaj. Meeting between Gandhiji and Chiang Kai Shek. Cripps Mission announced, March 11. Gandhiji meets Cripps, March 27. Proposals, "a post dated cheque." Rejected by all Indian parties for different reasons. Madras legislators pass Pakistan resolution, April. A. I. C. C. at Allahabad rejects Rajaji's Pakistan proposal. A. I. C. C. offices raided. "Quit India" articles in Harijan. Resolution passed by Working Committee, July 6. A. I. C. C. at Bombay, August 8 passes Quit India resolution. Gandhiji and Working Committee members and thousand of Congressmen arrested before day break August 9. Congress Committees declared illegal. Gandhiji's letter to Linlithgow 14th. Mahadeo Desai dies in prison, 15th. Bombing from air in Bihar. Military called out in many places. "Chimur, Ashti, Kulasekharapatnam, Devakottah, Karsad, Nadiad, Tenali, Mannargudi." Allah Baksh Premier of Sind dismissed for renouncing his titles. Prof. Bhansali starts fast against Chimur atrocities. Dr. S. P. Mukherji resigns ministership.

1943.

All India Press Hartal on January 6 as protest against restrictions. Gandhiji starts 21 days fast, February 10. "Crucify my flesh for the sins of others." Government publish "Congress Responsibility for Disturbances." Sir H. P. Mody, N. R. Sarker and M. S. Aney resign from Viceroy's Executive Council on the question of Gandhiji's

fast. Crisis in Gandhiji's life, February 21. Fast completed March 3. Death of Sri Satyamurti. Proposed Sapru deputation to Viceroy. Philips reveals he was refused permission to see Gandhiji April 25. Non Party Leaders' demand for impartial tribunal and for release of Gandhiji and Congress leaders. Government refuse to forward letter from Gandhiji to Jinnah. Wavell appointed Viceroy, June 18. Kasturba Gandhi develops heart attack. Question raised in House of Lords. Government agree to Kasturba seeing her sons and grandsons in detention. Government's refusal to release Kasturba.

#### 1944.

Kasturba dies on Shivaratri day at Aga Khan Palace, February 22. Nation wide mourning, Hartal and Kasturba day. Government Communique about Gandhiji's illness, April 6. Agitation all over India for Gandhijis' release. Gandhiji released "solely on medical grounds," May 6. Gandhiji arrives at Bombay, May 11. Devastating explosions in Bombay. Gandhi-Linlithgow correspondence published by Government. Gandhiji's letter to Viceroy. Viceroy replies a meeting could have no value. Rajaji proposals for Congress-League settlement. Gelder interview. Gandhiji's offer to Government. India debate in House of Commons. July 28. Gandhi-Jinnah correspondence released. Gandhiji returns to Wardha. Gandhiji asks underground Congress workers to discover themselves to police. Many respond, A. I. S. A. Meeting at Wardha. Gandhiji's proposals to revolutionise Khadi work. Gandhi-Jinnah pourparlers. The conversations prove abortive. Nearly one and a half crores collected for Kasturba Memorial fund.

1945.

Talks between Bhulabhai Desai and Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan. Air thick with rumours of an agreement between these two leaders of the Congress and League parties in the Assembly to form a provisional Government at the Centre. Sapru Committee carries on work collecting memoranda. At a Press Conference in Ahmedabad on January 16, Jinnah adopts a less truculent attitude. Says, "I am willing to go anywhere to see Mr. Gandhi." In February the Bihar Government interns some prominent Congress Leaders. Proposed Conference of Congress Workers in Akola banned. Sind Politics muddle. Hidayatulla Ministry defeated on a no-confidence motion. Hidayatulla forms new cabinet with Khan Bahadur Maula Bux. Jinnah demands that Maula Bux should join the League or quit the cabinet. The entire cabinet resigns again and Hidayatulla forms a new ministry excluding Maula Bux. On March 12, the frontier ministry of Sardar Aurangzeb Khan defeated and on March 16, Dr. Khan Saheb forms a Congress Ministry. First act of the ministry to release Khan Abdul Gaffur Khan and eight others including four Congress M. L. As. The Nazimuddin Ministry in Bengal defeated in the budget session. Governor takes over the administration of the province under Sec. 93 A. Pourparlers between Sir Mahomed Saadulla Premier of Assam and Gopinath Bardolai as a result of which the ministry resigned and after agreeing to certain conditions like the release of detainees, gains the support of the Congress. Saadulla forms a new ministry. Lord Wavell leaves for London to confer with the British cabinet about the war with Japan and political deadlock in

India. Sir John Colville, acting Viceroy. Ashti-Chimur Prisoner's day, April 3. Sir Noon, Sir Mudaliyar and Sir Achari selected by the Government to represent India at the San Francisco Peace Conference. Nationwide protest against the selection. Indian Industrialist's deputation to England and Gandhiji's trenchant comments thereon.

### HINTS FOR FURTHER STUDY.

**The History of the Indian National Congress** by Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya is a veritable text-book for all who wish to study the freedom movement in India but the book bears the obvious stamp of unmistakeable hurry. It is indeed regrettable that no attempt has so far been made either to revise the book or to bring it up to date. Other books which are of considerable use in further study are:—**Indian National Evolution** by Ambika Charan Mazumdar, **Indian Politics Since the Mutiny** by C. Y. Chintamani, **Congress in Evolution** by D. Chakrabarty and C. Bhattacharya, **Indian Constitutional and National Development** by G. N. Singh, **How India Wrought for freedom** by Dr. Anne Besant, For recent events, **the Unity of India** by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, **India Since Cripps** by H. G. Alexander, **A Week with Gandhi** by Louis Fischer, **Inside Asia** by John Gunther and **India Unreconciled** are recommended. The history of the Nationalist movement seen through the eyes of British Imperialism can be gleaned from the **Years of Destiny** by Sir John Coatman and **Indian Politics** by Reginald Coupland.

The enterprising firm of publishers, Messrs G. A. Natesan and Co. of Madras have brought out all the **Congress**

**Presidential Addresses** in two attractive volumes. Two companion volumes which the country would very much welcome would be a compendium of resolutions passed at successive sessions and a collection of short biographies of all the Presidents. It is up to the Congress to set up a body which will see that such books are published and widely distributed.

The following are some of the source books which would be useful to a research student who wishes to delve into the subject more deeply. **Punjab Sub-Committee Report 2, Volumes 1920, Report on Civil Disobedience** by Congress Inquiry Committee, 1922, Tagore & Co., **Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi, Government 1944. India Unreconciled, Why Cripps failed and Gandhi-Jinnah Talks** by Hindustan Times. **Peshawar Congress Inquiry Committee Report, 1930, March of Events, S. K. Patil, 1940, Nehru Committee Report, 1928, Report of all Parties Conference, 1929.**

The art of autobiography is unknown among us. Only four important leaders have written their own biographies. They are **A Nation in Making** by Surendranath Banerjea, **My Experiments with Truth** by Mahatma Gandhi, **An Autobiography** by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the **Indian Struggle** by Subhas Chandra Bose. The last named book is banned. A study of these books is imperatively necessary for every student of India's struggle for Swaraj. There is a fragment of an **Autobiography** written by the late Maulana Mahomed Ali and like everything that emanated from his pen is arresting and vigorous.

Biographies of national leaders are equally rare. The most important of them available are:- **Sir Pherozeshah Mehta** by Sir H. P. Mody, **Dadabhai Naoroji** by Sir Rustom Masani, **Life of Tilak** by N. C. Kelkar and **Life and Times of C. R. Das** by P. C. Ray. There are two interesting brochures, one on **Maulana Abul Kalam Azad** by Mahadev Desai and the other on **S. Srinivasa Iyengar** by K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar.

The number of books written against India's claim to nationhood is legion. From William Archer to Valentine Chirol, Katherine Mayo to Beverley Nichols, the list is formidable. But **The White Sahebs in India** by Reginald Reynolds is in quite a different category. Reference has already been made to the books of Gunther, Fischer and Alexander.

### *Our Publications*

- 1 Sayings of Mahatma Gandhi ( Sold Out )
- 2 All About the National Flag ( 2nd Ed. ) 4 As.
- 3 Gems from Congress Presidential Addresses 6 As.

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